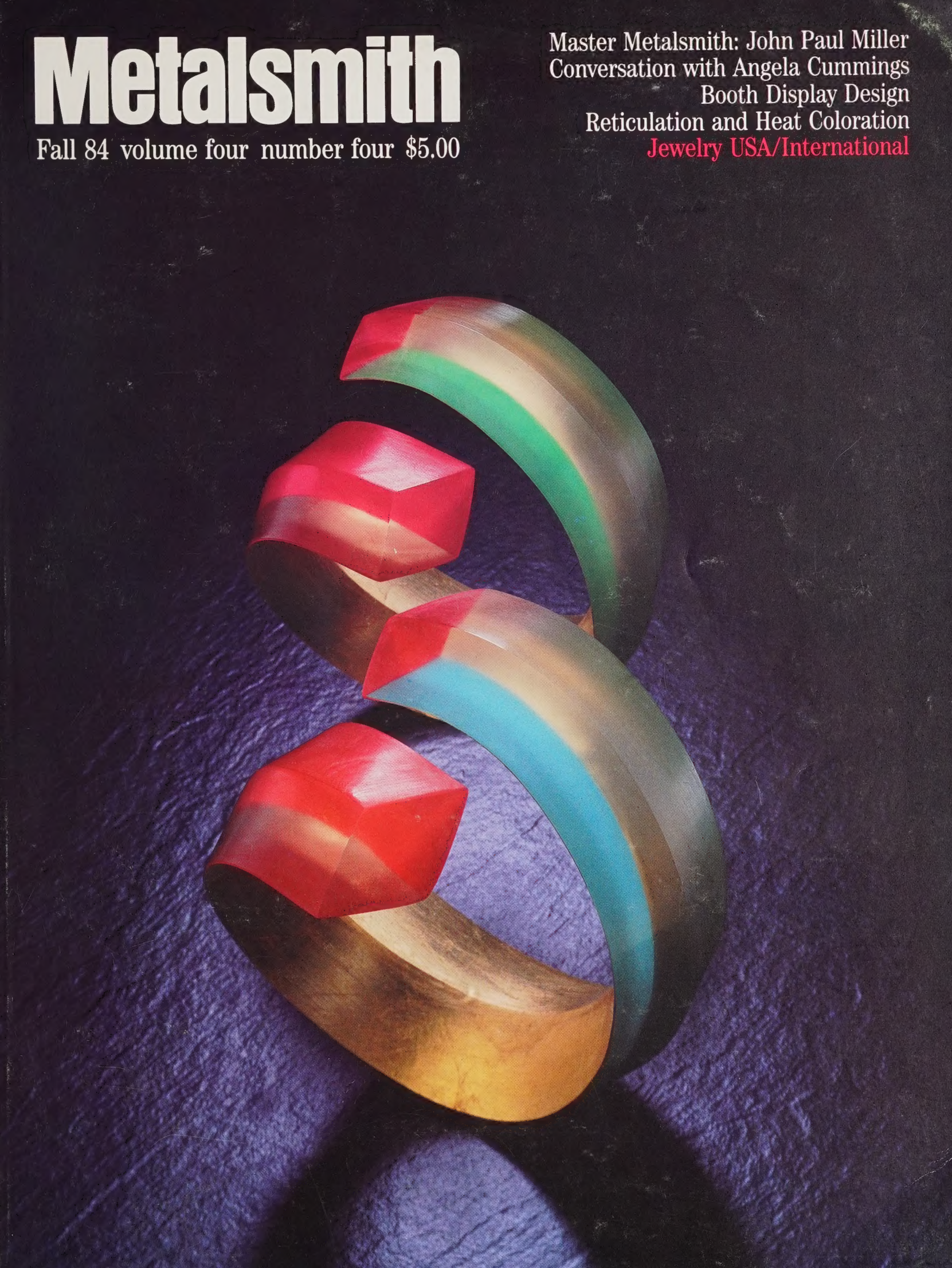
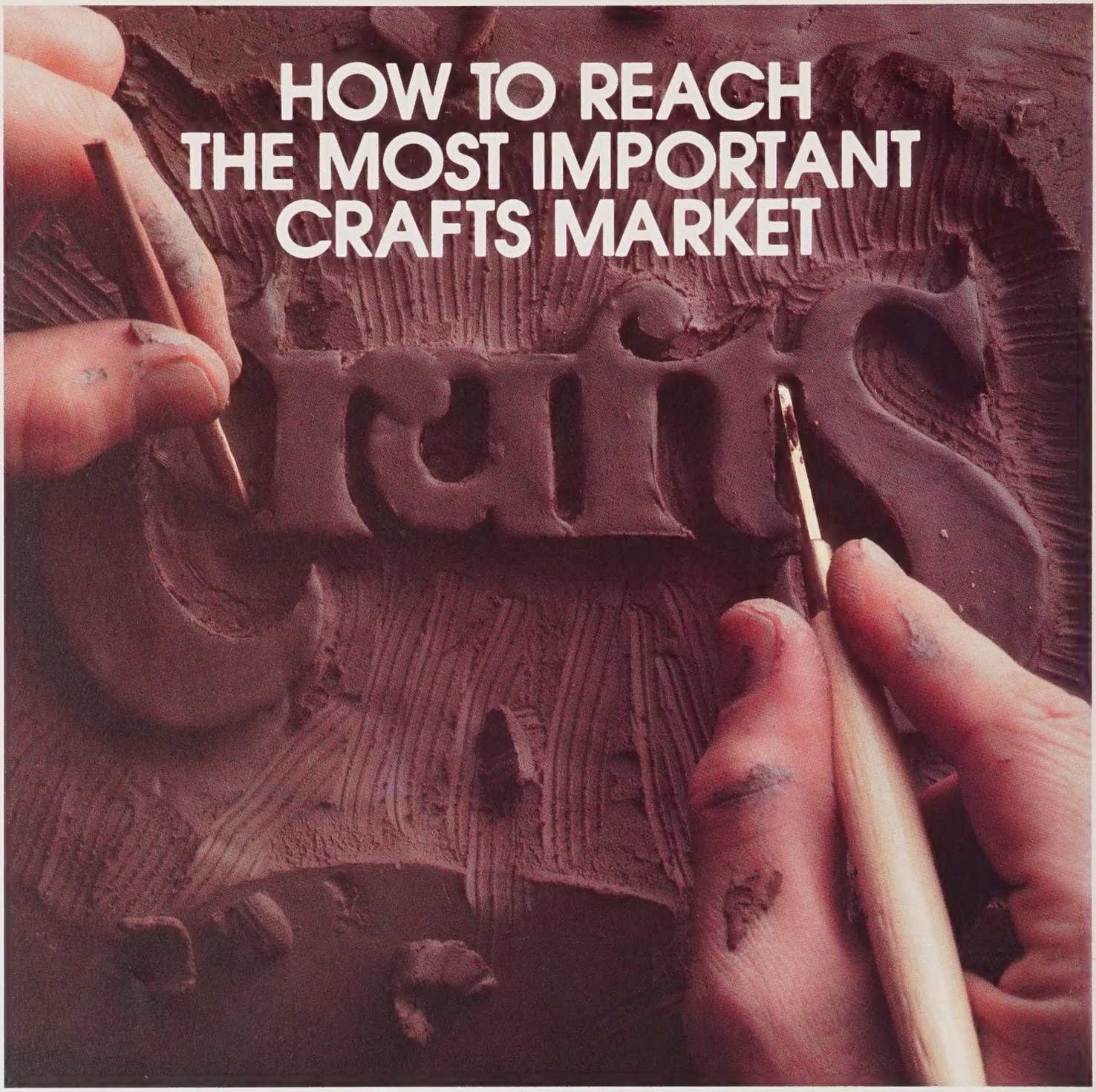
Metalsmith

Fall 84 volume four number four $5.00

Master Metalsmith: John Paul Miller
Conversation with Angela Cummings
Booth Display Design
Reticulation and Heat Coloration
Jewelry USA/International





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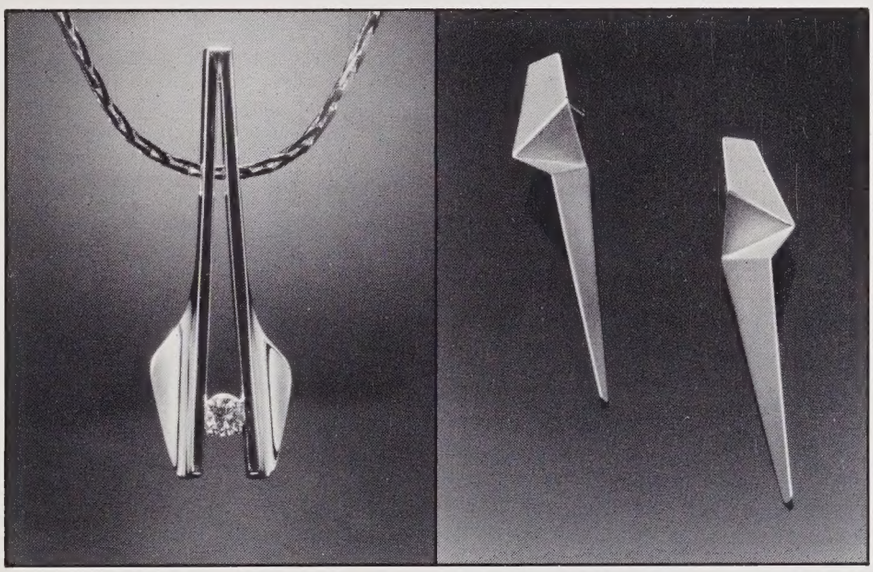

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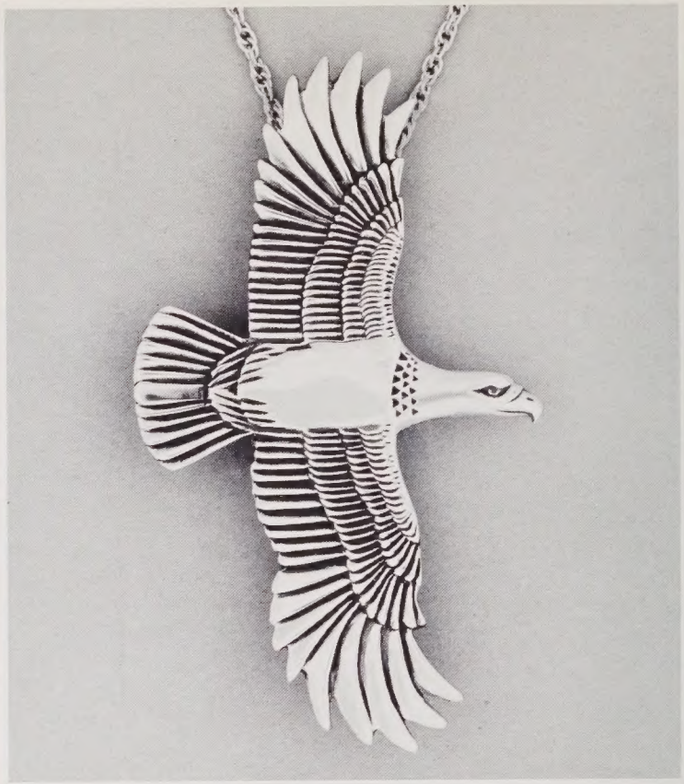

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October 11, 1984 — February 3, 1985

Metalsmith

Fall 84 volume four number four

55

Features

Jewelry USA 8
by Linda Norden

Jewelry International 16
by C.E. Licka

Master Metalsmith: John Paul Miller 22
by Roland Crawford

Form and Function in Booth Display 26
by Terri Lonier

A Conversation with Angela Cummings 30
by Jabez L. Van Cleef

Weckström on Weckström 34
by Ettagale Blauer

Reticulation and Heat Coloration of Shakudo and Shibuichi 38
by Diane Egbert

Louise Norrell: Ambiguous Visions 42
by Janet Koplos

Feedback: Judging the Platinum Jewelry Design Competition 44
by Ettagale Blauer

Departments

Letters to the Editor 4

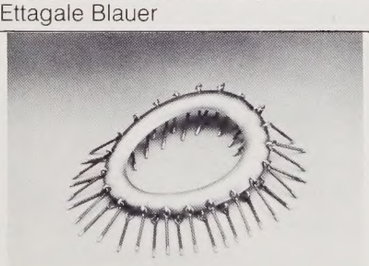
Saara Hopea-Untracht 1925-1984 6

Technical Briefs 58
by Tim McCreight

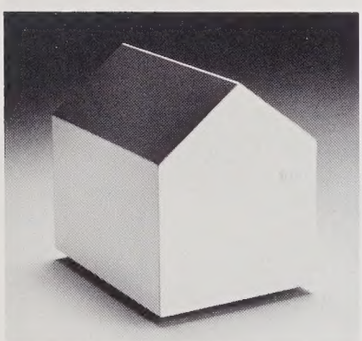
Book Reviews 59

Issues: Some Thoughts on International Jewelry 60
by Deborah Norton

Health Hazards: Questions & Answers 61
by Linda-Weiss Edwards



8



16

Exhibition Reviews

Belle and Roger Kuhn: New works 48
by Komelia Hongja Okim

Metals Invitational Exhibition 49
by Thomas Williams

Randy Long: Works in Metal 50
by Lynda LaRoche

57th Annual National High School Art Exhibition 50

James Evans: Jewelry and Small Objects 51
by Anne Barros

Objects D'Dart 51
by Ken Coleman

Japanese Designers in New York 52
by Pam Levine

The Cutting Edge: the Knifemaker's Art 52
by Marcia Lewis

Natalie Paul: Recent Works 53
by Sally Rogers

Statements in Sterling 54

Gorham: Masterpieces in Metal 55
by Tim McCreight

Cover: Sachiko Uozumi, *Bracelets*, acrylic, painted with Japanese lacquer colors and gold leaf, 1983, actual size. Sachiko is a young jeweler who, after studying graphic design in Tokyo, came to the United States to study silkscreen at the University of North Carolina. She later moved to New York to continue her studies at Pratt University in Brooklyn. She has worked for the Japanese wood sculptor Fumio Yoshimura, for a Japanese conceptual artist and also as a television modelmaker, from which she learned how to work with acrylics. Married to an industrial designer, Sachiko is now a full-time jeweler, selling her work in boutiques and galleries across the United States and in Japan and Australia.

This work was included in the American Craft Museum's "Jewelry USA" exhibit, which is reviewed beginning on page 8.

Photo: Keith Proctor

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Design Director/Martin Moskof
Designer/Marijana Sarich
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Copy Editor/Akiko Busch
Proofreader/Angela Caputo
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Jamie Bennett, Bruce Metcalf, Paula Dinneen, Bernard Bernstein, Robert Cardinale, Elizabeth Skidmore Sasser, C.E. Licka, Deborah Norton, Tim McCreight
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Many letters received are of interest to the entire readership. Unless stated otherwise, all letters may be included in "Letters to the Editor." Address letters specifically for this section to: Sarah Bodine, Editor, Metalsmith, *1 Penn Lyle Road, Princeton Junction, NJ 08550. Letters should be signed and a return address given. We reserve the right to edit for publication.*

Dear Editor:
I would like to correct Jamie Bennett's concluding statement about the direction of my more recent work in his article "American Holloware" (Summer/84 issue of *Metalsmith*).

I have not abandoned holloware. In fact, since January of 1983, I have concentrated solely in this area because of a need to make a more powerful statement than the scale of jewelry would seemingly allow me. A group of these new vessels was exhibited last February at the Great West Jewelry/Metal Symposium in Flagstaff and during this summer in the Skidmore College Craft Invitational.

—Helen Shirk, Professor,
Jewelry and Metalsmithing
San Diego State University

Dear Editor:
I wish to thank the Society of North American Goldsmiths for inviting me to the New York Conference. I found it a splendid affair. I imagine never before have so many goldsmiths and silversmiths gathered together in one place, and what nice people they are.

Whatever criticism might be made of individual aspects of the conference, I felt that a remarkable job of organising had been done by Sam Beizer and his colleagues.

The theme of the conference was well timed and I think that the younger members of the society must have found the various sessions both stimulating and informative, while the older members and visitors, like myself, must have had a marvellous time renewing old friendships and making new ones.

Please may I be invited to next year's Toronto Conference?

—Peter Gainsbury, Director
Design and Technology Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths, London

Dear Editor:
Jamie Bennett's article on American holloware was interesting in its content and research and was also provocative in that he is taunting metalsmiths to liberate themselves from the traditional and functional modes that have dictated holloware esthetic until most recently. It is curious to me that Mr. Bennett has risen to the stance of holloware critic and authority so quickly. I hope that this newly acquired responsibility will allow him to give some comments and answers to the question I now pose: If metalsmiths are to become free and expressive with holloware as their medium, and can successfully abandon function for form, and tradition for innovation, what arena will exist for the appreciation of this new direction? As a recently graduated student I have sought for this audience in routes that were available to me such as student competitions and shows. However, the stipulations for most of these are that holloware serve as functional (e.g., the Sterling Competition, see page 54). I found myself totally free in designing and making my art and then struggling to apply a superficial function to the piece so it could qualify in such shows.

How and where can new holloware be appreciated if it isn't quite sculpture or just another set of pots and pans?

—Myra T. Mimlitsch
Cranbrook Academy of Art

EDITORIAL

Many years ago, I took a class in sociology where we studied cultures and socioeconomic systems of various groups. One day, the instructor passed out a description of a tribe called the Nacirema. It was a fascinating culture with seemingly sadistic traits, as the men daily scraped their faces with knives, often until they bled; and the woman baked their heads in strange-shaped ovens for no apparent reason. Other weird tendencies cropped up over the two-page spread and the next day the instructor asked for comments. Amid much lively discussion, we were finally asked to spell Nacirema backwards . . . yes, American. The women's ovens were hairdryers and the men were shaving. We had been treated to a different perspective of ourselves.

One day last fall as my wife and I drove to a small college town to review a gallery goldsmithing opening, we were met by huge traffic jams, scores of police directing traffic, crowds of people surging across busy intersections and alas, the most unfortunate of unfortunates—no parking spaces. The weekly football game was about to begin. Talk about perspective.

The fact that grown men spend hours running up and down a field tossing a piece of hide back and forth in rather brutal attempts to maintain ownership—all in the name of fun—seems incredible. Even more amazing is that other intelligent, grown men and women will pay decent money to watch this madness. Calculate the time, energy and money collectively spent to operate and observe one game—ticket costs, mileage, snacks, parking, coaches, referees, physical facilities, trainers, ambulance crews, policemen, equipment, field maintenance, electricity—and you have quite a production.

Calculate it further by the sheer numbers of games and different sports that are played. Yes, American sports have a higher priority than art. So what's new? The next time a potential customer moans about the cost of good art jewelry or metalwork . . . give them a little perspective!
—MB

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7 Adam Smith
69 American Craft Council
72 Anchor Tool and Supply Co.
2 Arch Avery
5 Artwear Gallery
64 Billanti Castings
65 Boston Findings
2 Concepts
68 C.W. Sommers
64 C.R. Hill
64 Craft Reports
67 Downeast Trading
5 Elaine Potter Gallery
C4 Etienne Gallery
C3 Frei & Borel
66 Geisswein
C2 George Little
68 Goldsmith Journal
67 Greigers Inc.
1 Helen Drutt
70 Indian Jewelers
70 International Rolling Mills
58 John C. Campbell Folk School
71 Johnson Matthey
64 Kenneth Rose Gems
69 Komokin Japan
7 League of N.H. Crafts
72 Metalcrafters Supply
64 Met. Subs.
7 Nat'l. Craft Showroom
7 Parsons
65 Quality Craft Market
72 Reactive Metals Studio
5 Revere Academy
63 Rio Grande
68 R.I.S.D.
5 Rochester Inst. of Tech.
70 Shari Lewis
66 SNAG Books
66 Studio Jewelers
66 Summer Vail Workshop
67 Sybron/Kerr
1 Thomas Michaels
69 Toga
2 Washington Craft Show
65 Worchester Craft

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Saara Hopea-Untracht
1925–1984

Saara Hopea-Untracht died on Monday, the 25th of June this year. She lived and worked in Porvoo, Finland where she was a part of the life of the artistic community. Throughout her career Saara was a quiet but powerful force in Finnish design. She moved between design fields—from glassware to furniture to lighting to jewelry—with tremendous facility and grace. David McFadden, Curator of Decorative Arts at New York's Cooper-Hewitt Museum calls her a "natural-born designer, whose design ethic was an extension of her personality."

In the metals field, she was admired for her beautiful colored enamel works and for her jewelry which was a tranquil contemporary statement of the Scandinavian esthetic. As she explored the special qualities of silver, she developed a means of expression rich in traditional and humanistic roots. Building upon this, her work became sophisticated and yet remained sensitive.

Saara received her degree in interior design from the Central School of Industrial Design in Helsinki in the mid-1940s and ran her own freelance interior design business until 1949. Through the 50s, she worked as a designer for a variety of firms, including Taito and Wärtsilä/Arabia. During this time she also designed silver for the Ossian Hopea firm in Porvoo. In 1960 she emigrated to the United States where she worked as a freelance silver designer. She later returned to her native country.

Among her many awards and exhibitions were two silver medals in the Milan Triennale of 1954 and 57. She represented her country in the important World Crafts Council exhibition "In Praise of Hands" in Toronto in 1974 and was included in the comprehensive exhibition "Scandinavian Modern 1880–1980" at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum in New York in 1982. Her life work was celebrated by the town of Porvoo in 1980 with an exhibition at the local museum. In 1981 she received the Porvoo Cultural Award and the Finland State Prize for Arts and Crafts. She also established with her husband the Hopea/Untracht Fund, which awards an annual scholarship to a young artist.

With her husband, Oppi Untracht, she shared a deep appreciation and understanding of the myriad forms of Indian metalwork and jewelry. As they traveled together they collected both objects and photographs, contributing to a wide and embracing view of the meaning of Indian metalwork. Through Oppi's scholarly articles and publications this knowledge has been distilled and further shared, a testament to those who care about the human needs of expression and creativity. Saara and Oppi also shared the warmth of their home in Finland with many visiting craftsmen.

As makers of art and craft we have lost a gentle and intelligent spirit, whose designs were as quietly joyful as she was. As a friend and as an artist Saara will be sadly missed.

—Wendy Ramshaw

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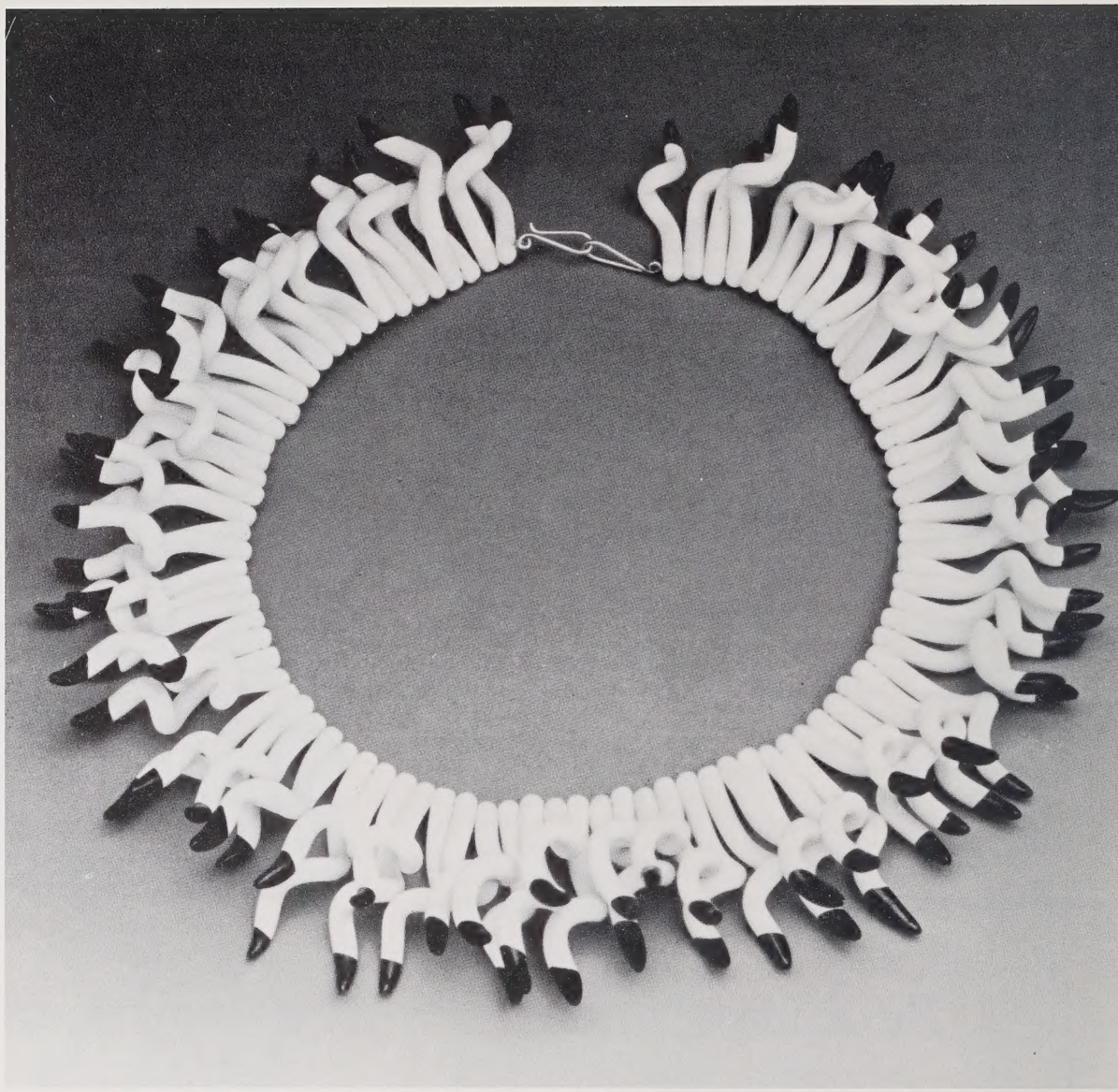
Cat Glazer, *Untitled* neckpiece, acrylic, glass paint, sterling silver, stainless steel findings, 18½ × 2", 1983. All photos: Ralph Gabriner, courtesy American Craft Museum



JEWELRY USA

by Linda Norden

With the exception of "New Departures in Jewellery," held at the American Craft Museum last summer as part of the "Britain Salutes New York" festival, it has been well over 10 years since the ACM offered a full-scale show of new work in jewelry. So their ambitious, concurrent staging of "Jewelry U.S.A." and "Jewelry International: Contemporary Trends,"—in itself, the first international exhibition of contemporary jewelry to appear in the United States—constituted a major event.

As installed at the American Craft Museum II, in the rear, glass-walled lobby of the International Paper Plaza, the cases housing American jewelry blurred into those of "Jewelry International." And, to a certain extent, it seems the museum may have intended the two shows to be taken as a whole—as testimony to new levels of sophistication in jewelry making. Vincent Beggs, the new educational coordinator for the museum, commented, for example, that the ACM's chief aim, here, was to raise the consciousness of viewers unfamiliar with contemporary jewelry and to encourage them to look at the individual pieces of jewelry as carefully as they would look at any painting or sculpture. On one level, at least, this goal seems to have been achieved. Judging from random comments overheard on numerous visits, most visitors did take the two shows as one and were very impressed with the variety and virtuosity of the jewelry presented. If they did not necessarily equate this jewelry with painting or sculpture, it is probably safe to say that, for many viewers, the combined exhibitions did stretch their perception of what jewelry can be and do.

But for those already familiar with contemporary jewelry, the simultaneous installation of "Jewelry USA" and "Jewelry International" offered the opportunity for a more serious and critical assessment. Taken as a type of comparative exercise, and not as a homogeneous presentation, the concurrent exhibitions provoked questions of national identity—were there distinctly American characteristics that emerged from "Jewelry USA?" for example—and of the identity and meaning to be found in jewelry-as-art.

From inception on, the two shows differed significantly. Culled, as it was, from a national competition—juried by jewelers Sharon Church and John Paul Miller and gallery owner Helen Drutt—"Jewelry USA" aimed above all to "survey the range and diversity of artists at work in the discipline at the current time." According to competition coordinator Richard Mawdsley and Society of North American Goldsmiths President Arline Fisch, "Entries were encouraged from jewelers producing one-of-a-kind pieces, from those involved with studio production, and from all those experimenting with new directions and attitudes."[1] "Jewelry International," on the other hand, represents the curatorial selection-by-invitation of Drutt alone. This means that while "Jewelry USA's" jurors were limited to the best examples of the variety of trends that have characterized American jewelry in the last decade, Drutt was free to solicit only those jewelers whose work she found inspirational. It is a difference that frustrates any real comparisons and ultimately does a disservice to the Americans. Drutt's international survey comprises a selection based on the clearly articulated—if somewhat eclectic and personal—values of a long-term supporter of serious craft-as-art. In her carefully written catalog essay, Drutt underscores her strong commitment to an historic evaluation and analysis of jewelry and speaks to her preoccupation with influences and sources. More important, Drutt focuses on individuals ". . . who are committed to a concept of body ornament that does not compromise the integrity of the individual artistic idea."[2] However briefly she describes the contributions of the jewelers in her survey, Drutt names names; her effort to identify the genesis of specific ideas and formal innovations not only allows her to give individual jewelers credit, it is an essential step in allowing jewelry to be treated as art and not as "anonymously" created craft. One might quibble with some of Drutt's selections, but, overall, "Jewelry International" offers strong evidence that thinking craft-artists are challenging the limitations and expanding the possibilities available to traditional jewelry.

No such sense of focus or underlying conviction emanates from "Jewelry USA." There were some wonderful, poignant, even powerful pieces and an outstandingly high level of technical facility throughout the exhibition, but virtually nothing that could be called radical. It was difficult to discern just what criteria were brought to bear by the jurors in the winnowing of some 2,200 slide submissions down to the 220 pieces actually displayed. The excerpted dialogue of the jurying process offers more insight into the jurors' concerns than can be found in their brief one-paragraph introduction to the catalog. But, these jurors seem more interested in observing general trends—for example, the "pervasive use of color" or the fact that, for the most part, this work "signals a distinct return to jewelry that is ultimately wearable"[3]—than in calling attention to the specific contributions of individual jewelers.

...for those already familiar with contemporary jewelry, the simultaneous installation of "Jewelry USA" and "Jewelry International" offered the opportunity for a more serious and critical assessment.

As a result, the jurors' additional claim—that "this collection of handmade jewelry focuses on concept. . ."[4]—seems less convincing. In fact, one was left with the overriding impression of an abundance of virtuosity and a relative paucity of clearly discernible conceptual concerns—much the same impression one receives walking through the Northeast Craft Fair these days (not coincidentally, another juried show). Whether this situation owes more to the museum's direction, the jurors involved, juried shows in general, the jewelers, themselves, or—as Robert Lee Morris suggested in Summer, 1984 issue of *Metalsmith*[5]—to the academic institutions in which most American jewelers now train, a nagging question raised by "Jewelry USA" is "What makes American jewelry so benign?"

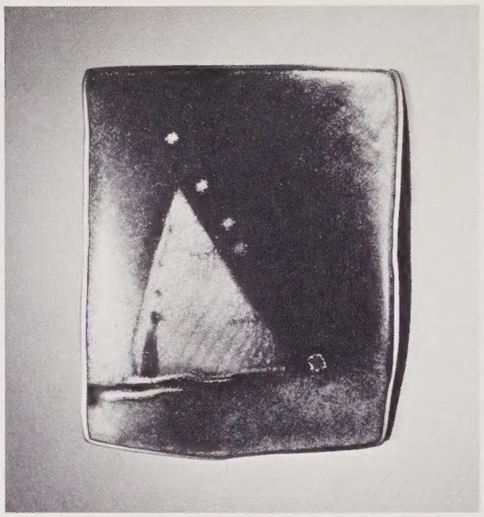
Rose Slivka offers a harsh, but insightful, response to this question in her review of last year's "New Departures in Jewellery."[6] Her complaint centered on the notion of the American jeweler as "piranha"; the disarming, but all too prevalent tendency for American jewelers to appropriate and decontextualize stylistic or esthetic effects, while disregarding the sources that inspired them. For Slivka, the London-based jewelers were ". . . the most exciting phenomenon that has come our way in the last twenty years.... They have undertaken to pose the serious questions of our time—individual responsibility, social mores, status true and false, daring to tread the risky bridge between art and design, philosophy and politics and in so doing they project . . . an affirming spirit of courage and thought." Whereas: "In this country where revolution is considered an American tradition, the jewelers have played a conservative role. American jewelry is the most staid, the most concerned with 'clientele.' True, they have made technical and material innovations, particularly as 'sculpture to wear' in which they would appear to put formal values over gold and precious stones. Nevertheless, the largest part of the output has been the general run of 'chachkas' with technical and stylistic refinements and *no ideas.*"[7]

None of the "Jewelry USA" jurors show evidence of concern over the "cultural cannibalism," dearth of ideas, or dependence on "clientele" that Slivka addresses in her cri-

tique of American jewelry. In fact, where Slivka criticizes Americans for their over-responsiveness to "clientele," the jurors praise the return to an interest in wearable jewelry as a retreat from the esoteric and ambiguous objects that characterized much American jewelry art a decade ago. And, while all three jurors, when asked to comment on "the criteria applied to their evaluation of entries,"[8] stated their desire for some sort of unique quality in the work, only Drutt even alluded to the role that a "point of view" might have in contributing to that unique quality. Where Church ". . . wanted to be instructed as to an individual's unique *approach*," and Miller sought ". . . some sort of feeling or presence. . ." in the *piece*, as opposed to the maker, Drutt reiterated her search for an "excellence" that goes beyond technical expertise to ". . . a sense of originality in the work which permits me to identify with *the maker* . . . (and) . . . a point of view that allows me to know that the human spirit is continued . . ." (All emphases are my own.)

Both Slivka's concern with the "reactive" tendencies motivating many contemporary American jewelers and Drutt's focus on the relationship between the originality of a piece and the point of view of its maker were pointed out by Wayne Higby, two years ago, as problems facing all those Americans attempting "craft-as-art." In his review of the ACM's "Young Americans: Award Winners," Higby described craft as, fundamentally, "a celebration of skill and the beauty of materials," while ". . . art is a revealing of the unknown." After evaluating the work of the young Americans "award winners," Higby suggested that, for the craftsman, achieving significant art entails making a choice: "The choice is to explore the boundaries of our fine-arts heritage or to find in crafts new dimensions of artistic achievement. . . . Choosing between these alternatives presents a challenge to those artists who possess the traditional craftsman's gifts. Unfortunately, the trend has been to avoid making a choice. Ideas are lost in efforts to achieve recognition, and true artistic vision is continually blurred by a willingness to alter beliefs to fit the moment. As a result, clarity in craft remains elusive."[9]

The problem of identifying and communicating vital ideas is not, of course, unique to American craft. One of the most tired stereotypes of Americans, in general, centers on our anti-intellectual impatience with ideas and our obsession with materials and image. At the same time, a good deal of the most recent, Post Modern criticism has grown out of a belief that there can be no more "original" ideas. Yet such Post Modern notions as "appropriation" or "pastiche"—what professor of literature Frederic Jameson has described as the mimicry of the



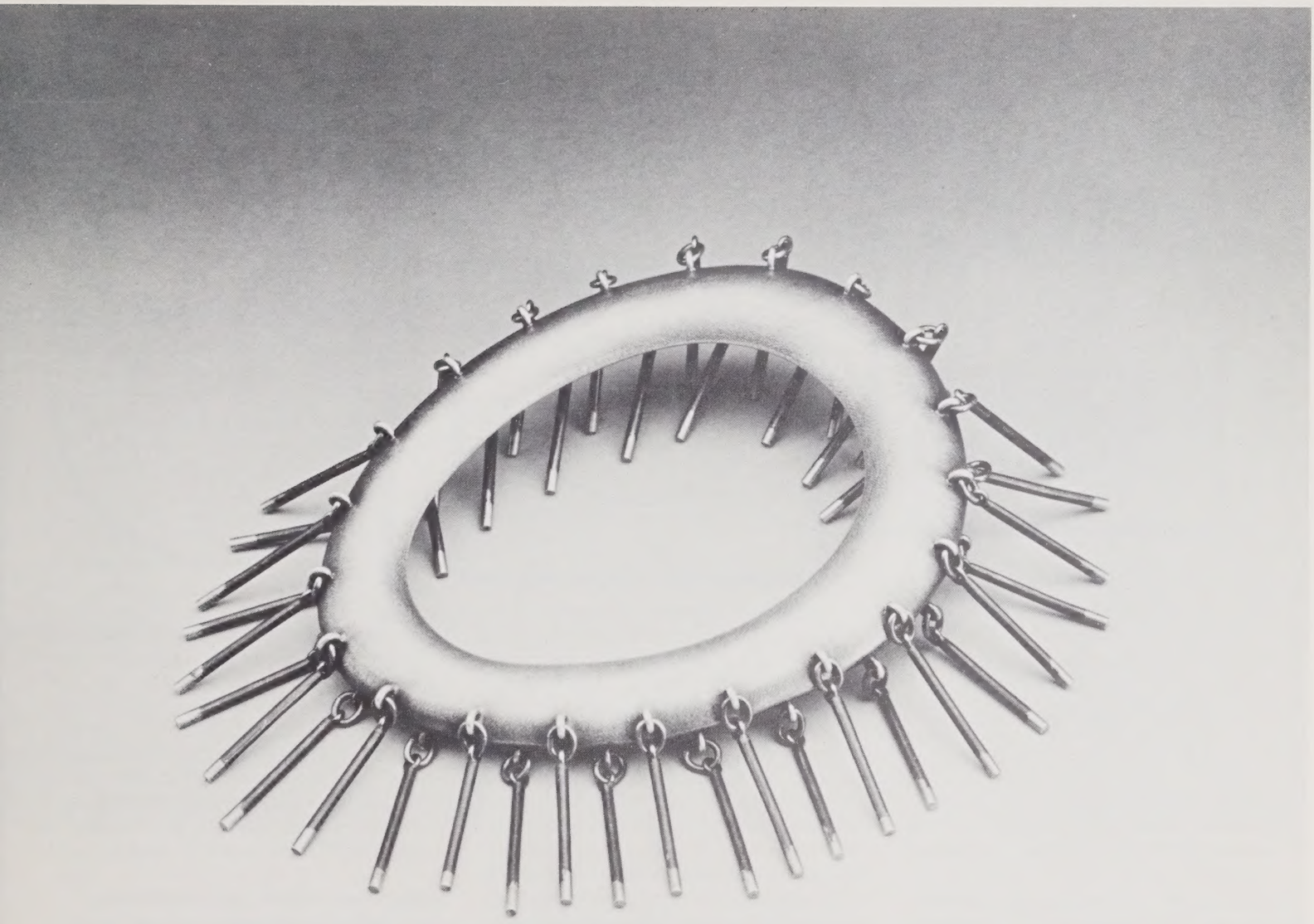
Rebekah Laskin, *Charcoal #1 brooch*, enamel, copper, 1½×2×⅛", 1984

"mannerisms and stylistic twitches" of a celebrated style, without the sense of humor and irony found in true parody[10]—or even the so-called "death of the subject" are not precisely relevant to contemporary American jewelry. The "cultural cannibalism" that distresses Slivka and the problems raised by Higby refer to slightly different phenomena, if only because of the relative youth of the American craft-as-art movement. Such recent trends in American jewelry, for example, as the widespread use of Japanese materials and techniques, the juxtaposition of conspicuously disparate materials, or even the proliferation of "spiculum" several years back, or of titanium and niobium more recently, have little to do with the self-conscious debunking of Modernist canons. Rather, they speak to the far less ideological but consuming appetite that many contemporary American jewelers seem to have for novel esthetic *effects*—an attitude that is decidedly stimulated by an increasing American market for "art" jewelry and that may also be encouraged by our academic jewelry departments.

The transition from student to mature, independent artist and the identity of the craft artist vis-à-vis the production craftsman has become as confused as the stance of the avant-garde artist vis-à-vis popular culture. As all of the "Jewelry USA" jurors acknowledged, jewelry-making has become increasingly viable as a profession in this country, with more and more American jewelers professionally trained and economically self-sufficient—which is, of course, a good thing. But to maintain this self-sufficiency, most of these jewelers must produce two, theoretically different, types of work. As a result, the tremendous surge in options for American crafts and craftsmen can also encourage innovation at the expense of meaning—or a failure to distinguish between the responsibilities of artist and artisan, between conceptual purpose and esthetic presence.

It is possible, too, of course, that many American jewelers may not be interested in "conceptual purpose," may intentionally work to create elegant or enjoyable decoration and to ignore the deeper meanings available to jewelry—be they spiritual, metaphysical or political. My own impression, however, is that the American culture offers less precedent for "meaningful" jewelry. Unlike many of the cultures represented in "Jewelry International"—certainly the European countries and Japan—the United States can claim little in the way of a deeply rooted, commonly understood tradition of goldsmithing against which contemporary American jewelers might establish some new identity. We have no dominant church, none of the ritual esthetics of the Japanese, not even the polemical underpinnings that motivated William Morris's revival of the British Arts and Crafts Movement and, later, de Stijl and early Bauhaus. So, whereas much of the impetus behind current jewelry making outside the United States grows out of a profound, if adversarial, reaction to an entrenched tradition, or traditions, American jewelers, by and large, have to look elsewhere for inspiration. While international exhibitions, workshops conducted by prominent non-American goldsmiths visiting the United States and the proliferation of media featuring jewelry and goldsmithing have catalyzed a great deal of cross-cultural exchange, one of the most striking contrasts that emerged from the juxtaposition of "Jewelry USA" and "Jewelry International" was the lurking presence of a strong sense of history behind most of the international work and the conspicuous absence of it in the American work. This contrast may also explain the greater irony and polemic edge underlying much of the work in "Jewelry International."

Compare, for example, the Dutch goldsmith Paul Derrez's pleated plastic and steel necklace (JI #34) with Arline Fisch's red coated-copper, machine-knitted collar and cuff (#40). When Drutt observes, in her catalog essay, that Derrez's "pleated plastic collars remind us that Rembrandt's guildmasters' collars are not so far away in time,"[11] it is safe to say that she is calling attention to an immediate, if superficial, association not lost of Derrez's Dutch audience. This simple reference gives Derrez's necklace an historical dimension by calling on (collective) memory for some of its meaning. But Derrez also plays on the irony of this association by substituting the industrial, nonvaluable materials of plastic and steel for the fancy lace that endowed those old Dutch collars with the status their Bourgeois wearers desired. And then Derrez invests this plastic and steel with an even



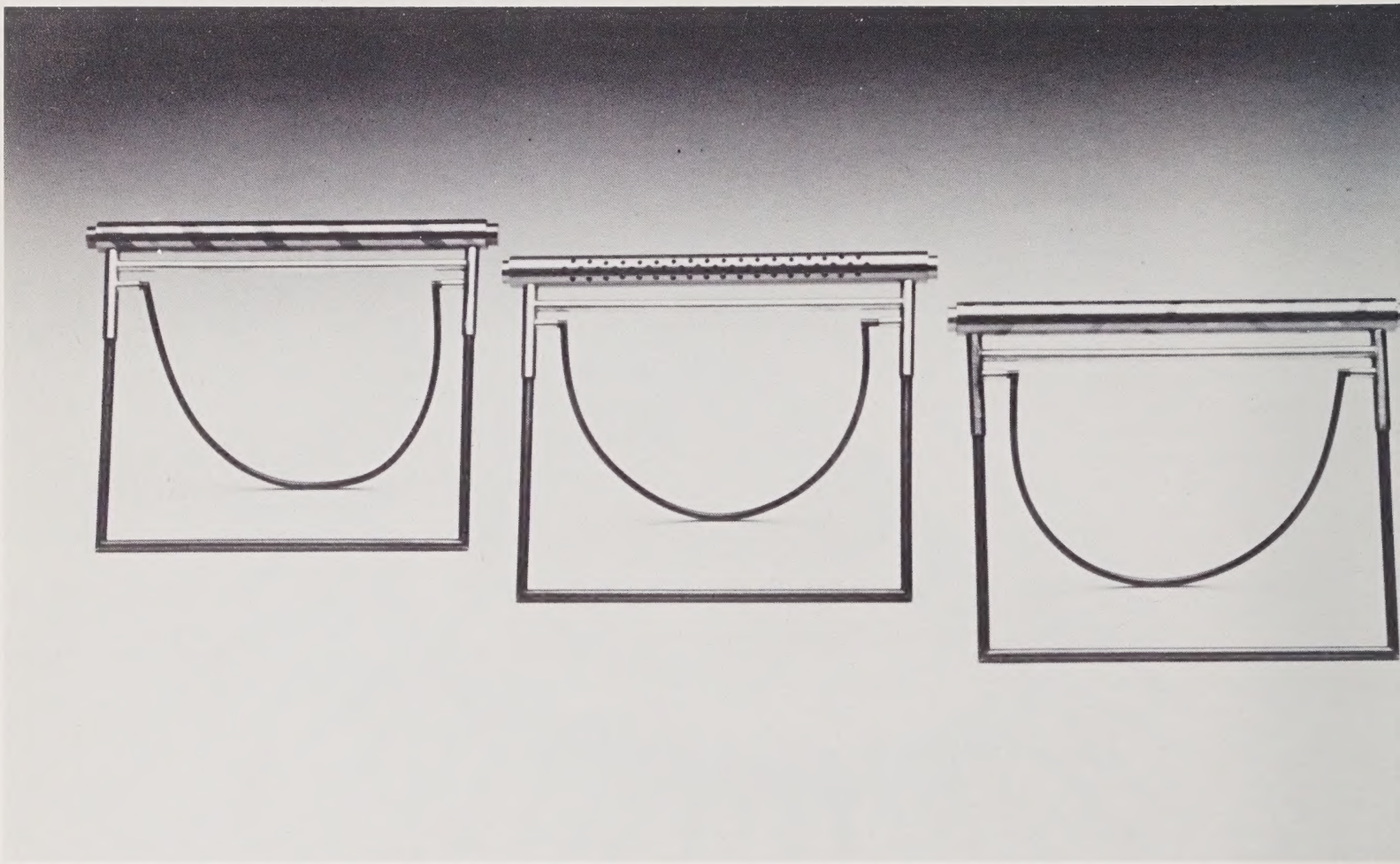
Robin Quigley, *Bracelet with Gold Tipped Fringe*, sterling silver, 14k gold, copper, 4 × 3½ × ½", 1983

greater sense of duration transforming the simple circle into a Moebius-strip, creating a mathematical analogue for a time-space continuum, that, not insignificantly, also lies gracefully around the neck.

Fisch's boisterous, more whimsical collar and cuff conjure no such ironic or multivalent associations. Conspicuously free of historical or symbolic significance, they celebrate, instead, the liberation from more modest, conservative jewelry and the time-saving technical innovation of machine-weaving. The form, itself—less controlled and responsive to the body—is determined, to a great extent, by the machine-weaving process. And the color, while exuberant, seems somewhat arbitrary. Yet one feels that these considerations are not as important to Fisch. She seems far more interested in providing an immediate sense of delight and bemused pleasure, associating facility with felicity.

John Paul Miller's, I think accurate, observation that most of the work in "Jewelry USA" had ". . . a feeling of being made for the present. . .a transient feeling. . . ."[12] would seem to speak to this difference in intention. His own pieces (e.g., #124), while never much to my own taste, certainly reinforce his belief that jewelry should be made to endure over time. The painstaking granulation and cloisonné, even the conspicuous use of gold—John Paul Miller signatures—all reinforce this belief. But Miller's feeling that contemporary American jewelry is characterized by a spirit of experi-

Miller's feeling that contemporary American jewelry is characterized by a spirit of experimentation seems corroborated by much of the work in "Jewelry USA."



Leslie Leupp, *Three Bracelets*, titanium, aluminum, steel, 3 × 3 × ¼", 1982

mentation seems corroborated by much of the work in "Jewelry USA."

Over the last two decades, American jewelry has moved away from the dominant influence of the Arts and Crafts Movement, from an idea of "hand-craftedness" manifested in irregularities of surface, undisguised tool marks, an uncompromising truth to materials and relatively straightforward techniques. Caroline Strieb's *Gardens of Mars* (#178) was virtually the only example of this earlier "tradition" of American handmade jewelry in "Jewelry USA." With its richly reticulated, rough-hewn silver beads, careful balance and palpable sense of weight, Strieb's necklace had an honest, direct presence that seemed almost old-fashioned, though welcome, amidst all the "high-tech" jewelry surrounding it. The clarity in her work in no way implies a lack of sophistication or control. But it represents a type of obviously hand-crafted, anticommercial jewelry that, for the most part, has been replaced by a notion of handmade jewelry based on technical refinement and innovation. American jewelry has become more varied and the lines between commercially produced and handmade jewelry have narrowed considerably.

The "pervasive" use of color, broader range of materials employed, and rise in wearable objects observed by the "Jewelry USA" jurors attests to these characteristics—which also reflect the pluralism evident in the larger American art and fashion worlds. The prevalence of color, in particular, may parallel the proliferation of "Neo-expressionist" painting here and in Europe in the last few years. But the presence of color alone does not guarantee

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an "expressive" piece of jewelry. The rainbow hues of "interference" coloring on titanium, niobium, tantalum, etc. have become ubiquitous in both commercial and handmade jewelry. (I counted no less than 14 pieces that made use of it in "Jewelry USA.") This "ups the ante" on its expressive potential and, unfortunately, works to undermine such pieces as Dean Smith's stick pins (#174 and 175), Tamiko Kawata Ferguson's *Feather Necklace* (#38), Victoria Howe's necklace (#83) or Doug Samore's neckpiece, *N1 4* (#149). In several of these the selection and application of the color bears no compelling relation to the form. Ferguson's *Feather Necklace* and Joke Van Ommen's *Kite Pin #1* (#195), on the other hand, use the gradual transition of hues to reinforce the idea of the object (feather) or sensation (a kite flying) suggested by the title and form of the piece. Ommen's pin is more effective for its discretion, limited palette and acknowledgment of the superficial—in the literal sense of that word: on the surface, only—nature of interference coloring.

Other methods of coloring stand out, by comparison. Linda MacNeil and Sara Young use the rich, pure color of glass effectively. MacNeil's saturated primaries and second-

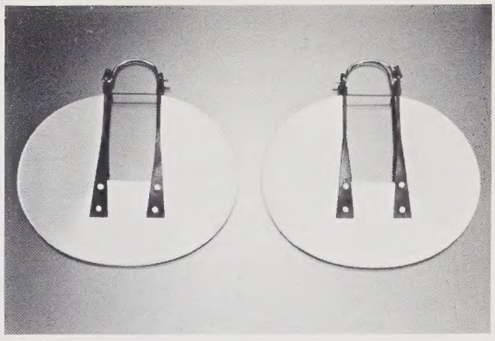
aries provide a rich counterpoint to the tightly controlled, symmetrical arrangement of her black-and-white triangles and cylinder beads, while Young exploits the capacity glass has to sheath saturated colors with more transparent layers in a necklace whose flexibility belies the fragility of the individual glass beads. (MacNeil #115; Young #206). And now that the deluge of mokumé and married metals has subsided, somewhat, Gayle Saunders's persistent experiments with juxtapositions of colored and patterned metal surfaces begin to stand out—for their subtlety and because Saunders no longer allows the surface effects to dominate her jewelry. Her two brooches and necklace (#152, 153, 154) were some of the most satisfying pieces in "Jewelry USA." In brooch (#152), Saunders frames a paper-thin, ragged patch of moired, pastel golds, centering it within a much larger circle of black, mild steel. With the patch itself framing an empty, square hole, the pin works to "feature" the clothing onto which it gets pinned. In addition, Saunders plays on the opposing material properties, as well as the color, of the two very different materials. By forming the thin, steel wire into a perfect, smooth circle, she undercuts its inherent tension; the precious bit of supposedly ductile gold, on the other hand, is little more than a rough, torn fragment. Yet by "mounting" the fragment, dead center, within the circle, Saunders acknowledges its lingering preciousness. On a dark garment, the black circle would all but disappear, thrusting the gold into stark relief.

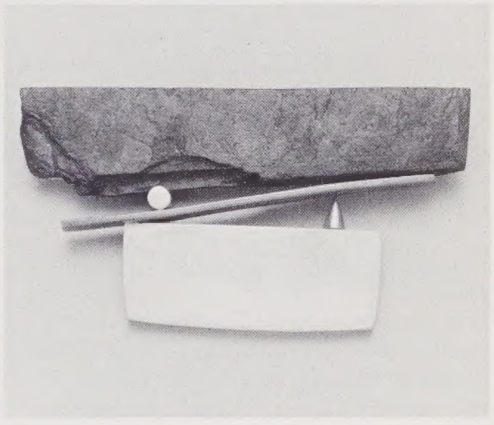
Another jeweler who worked magic with color and sensuous form was Sachiko Uozumi. A Japanese-American who has only been making jewelry for several years, Uozumi has said that living in the United States has actually sharpened her understanding and appreciation of Japanese craft and esthetics. Her two bracelets (see cover) and necklace/belt, titled *The Crystal Cube is a Timeless Box for Pandora* (#194), reveal the austere, controlled and reductive beauty we associate with a Japanese esthetic, yet they incorporate no traditional Japanese materials or techniques—no mokumé, no shibuichi, no shakudo. Instead, Uozumi achieves this (Japanese) intensity by orchestrating a series of highly calculated oppositions. In the bracelets, the hard-edged, architectural planes of the lucite are made to curve sinuously, conjuring an absent arm. And in both pieces, rich gold-colored, metal-leaf transforms the slick, industrial lucite and air-brush colors into enigmatic prisms, rendering the "crystal cubes" indeed, "timeless." Uozumi heightens this enigmatic pitch even further in the necklace/belt by connecting the individual cubes with thin, dark leather knots, actually quite flexible, but appearing, for all the world, to be bits of sharp, barbed wire. Her materials become "mediums" in the mystical sense, operating simultaneously on a metaphysical and kinesthetic level.

Yet, ironically, the sensuous quality in Uozumi's jewelry—its responsiveness to the curvature or movement of the body—owes more to ideas gleaned from contemporary, body-conscious, American fashion than to traditional Japanese esthetics. Ironically, because with all the discussion about a "return to wearability" in contemporary American jewelry, only a very few of the pieces in "Jewelry USA" respond so profoundly to the body. With several exceptions—notably Mary Lee Hu's exquisitely simple and elegant *Choker #67* (#86) or Robin Quigley's marvelous fringed, almost fetishistic, pairings of bracelet and earrings (#135, 136, 137)—"wearability" amounts to little more than a reduction in scale or the appendage of wearable findings to otherwise autonomous objects.

While the tide of large-scale, self-consciously artsy, exhibition objects has certainly ebbed a bit, far too many of the jewelers represented in "Jewelry USA" seem to be "problem solving"—continuing along lines established by academic exercises. Occasionally, a rigorous use of this "academic" process of experimentation encourages a refinement of form-idea relationships. Both Rebekah Laskin and Don Friedlich, for example, gain from their use of the brooch/object format as a "constant" or "control" for a series of in-depth, focused investigations of material phenomena or abstract ideas. Laskin's brooding and darkly beautiful enamels, with their narrow range of neutral colors, take on the intensity of their maker's nuanced inquiries into color density, light and shadow. Don Friedlich's less consistently successful efforts, nevertheless, reveal a sophisticated sensibility and a thoughtful exploration of the essential properties of materials and the dynamics of controlled forms. His *Balance Series* brooch (#50) is a striking essay in architectonic balances and surface tensions. Susan Hamlet uses the bracelet format in similar fashion, analyzing functional processes and categories of materials. In *Shim Bracelet #3* (#70), Hamlet "displays" her "findings" by casing them within plastic tubing—ironically transforming wearability into exhibition.

But more often, the "problem-solving" encouraged in university jewelry departments results in technical showpieces, such as Daniel Jocz's elaborately hinged and inlaid bracelet *Taper* (#91). Flexibility here would seem to be the "subject" of the bracelet which impresses more for the obvious work it required than for its grace or genuine wearability. Edgar Morey's

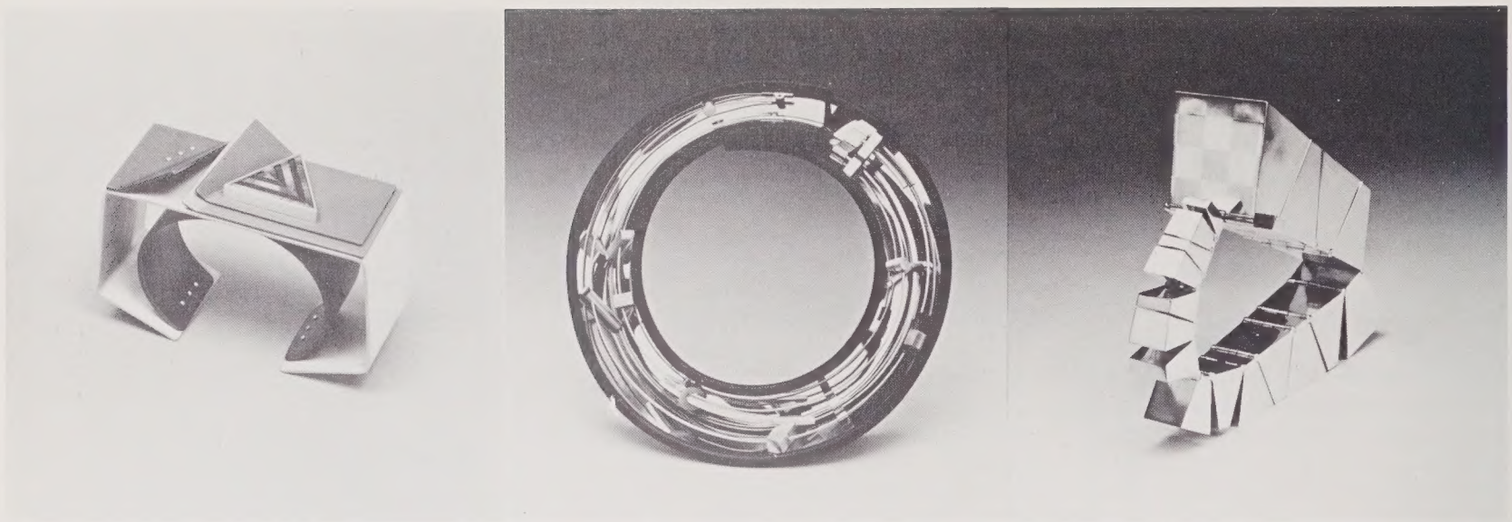




Top: Faith Allotey-Jordan, *Lunar Ellipse* earrings, nickel silver, iron wire, 2½ × 2½", 1983. Above: Donald Friedlich, *Balance Series* brooch, slate, sterling silver, bronze, 14k gold, 1 5/16 × 2⅜ × ¼", 1982

Roller Ring Five, One, and Six (#126) and Christopher Secor and Leslie Leupp's bracelets (#161 and #103, respectively) reveal equally self-conscious efforts to accommodate real fingers and wrists, but somehow come off more elegantly. At the same time, while Miller's remark that "There weren't many pieces in ("Jewelry USA") that took advantage of movement. . ."[12] is, again, quite astute, earrings for pierced ears—as Miller also noted—provide some refreshing exceptions. Faith Allotey-Jordan's ear-framing *Lunar Ellipse(s)* (#6) and Philip Fike's broomlike bunchings of delicate, forged yellow and white gold wires (#39), for example, really do move in response to the body. Sandra Enterline's earrings (#37) of three diminishing circles, lashed with flat copper wire and Pam Levine's pair—in which a delicate taper of shiny silver dangles from a seemingly bulky roll of flat, black chrome—make use of the free space beneath the earlobes to play on the perceptual discrepancies between visual heaviness and actual weight.

Pieces as varied as Frank Trozzo's *Masque Ring #1* (#192), Ignatius Widiapradja's *Bamboo Pins #2, #4 and #5* (#202), Pamela Whynott's *Dead Fish* (#200) and Stephen J. Albair's *Kiss* (#5)—to name only a few examples—all remain essentially self-referential, static



Left: David Tisdale, *Rectangular Bracelet,* aluminum, 14k gold, mosaic stone (onyx/tiger eye), 2¼ × 3½ × 1¼", 1983 **Center:** Susan Hamlet, *Shim Bracelet* #3, stainless steel, sterling silver, plastic, 3⅝ × 3⅝ × ½", 1984. **Right:** Daniel Jocz, *Taper* bracelet, sterling silver, 18k yellow gold, 1 × 1 × 7⅛", 1983

objects. I found Albair's *Kiss* particularly troubling in its effort to elevate a humble but attractive pin into an "art-object" by means of an elaborate, oppressive, grossly overscaled frame. I also had difficulty with several objects of obscure purpose that, 10 years ago, might have hung on the wall, but have been shifted into the 47th Street category of "conversation piece" jewelry. Fisch cites the presence of such items as hats and the increase in rings, bracelets and necklaces—as opposed to brooches—as evidence of a greater interest in "ornament."[13] Quigley's jewelry, I think, with its primitive associations and incorporation of sound, can truly be described as "ornament," as can the work of Uozumi and Hu. In each of these cases, the jewelry gains depth and resonance through its capacity to transform a literal idea into its formal/material equivalent so that one "feels" rather than "thinks" a response to the piece. In jewelry, this almost always entails some sort of dialogue with the body.

Uozumi, not coincidentally, has become a member of Robert Lee Morris's "Artwear" stable, and it is Morris, I think, more than any American jeweler, who should be credited with exploiting the idea of "art to wear"—*not* by creating art objects for the body, but by celebrating the body with art. His "signature" torso displays are less gratuitous display gimmicks than essential supports for work that is not realized without a body. It may be a bit cynical to observe that wearable jewelry is more salable, but this seems a point worth mentioning. (Similar criticisms have been leveled at the current art market: painting sells a good deal better than site-specific sculpture.) Morris has confronted the market head-on by attempting to create "avant-garde" fashion. His work may be quickly appropriated by the world of high fashion and promotion, and he may not be exploring the political capacity within jewelry that Slivka observed, above, among certain British jewelers. But Morris's clients, too, must "demonstrate commitment" to his jewelry. This is in marked contrast to, for example, Carole Bowen's *Eraser Suite* rings (#17) which may harbor some political intentions—as "anti-cocktail" rings, perhaps—but give little evidence of requiring rings to make their point—or pun.

If "Jewelry USA" is to be taken as representative of contemporary American jewelry, then a kind of convoluted, punnish humor ought to be cited as a truly American characteristic. This literal humor and sense of play—as opposed to the more serious irony that distinguishes so much of the European and British jewelry—shows up in some very dissimilar pieces. Tina Fung Holder's neckpiece *Contessa-SGX* (#82), for instance, is an unpretentious, marvelously simple veil of gold and silver safety pins suspended on an "armature" of crocheted cotton thread. And Cat Glazer's *Black and White Neckpiece* (#58) has the energy of a hundred live and kicking legs—a string of Rockette legs dancing. Yet Glazer's reduced, repetitive modules and stark black/white color contrast lend the neckpiece an elegance that belies its whimsical associations. Laurie Hall's humor takes a more narrative turn, deriving some of its charm from the "aged" look of her materials and the folk-art sources it seems to tap. Her titles are more than clever and in her most effective work, such as *Chief Bone Gone Fish'in Bone* (#68), the narrative works to carry one's eye around the wearers' torso, unifying a necklace that also functions as a collection of charms or talismans.

On the other hand, Jocelyn M. Merchant's brooch *Repair* (#119), while controlled and intentionally literal, comes off as a precious and fleeting play on words. I had similar problems with Kate Wagle's *Party Trick II* (#197) brooch and Gail Marie Fisher's *Party Wear Series: Brush Bracelet* (#42), although in Fisher's case the joke was funnier and had a more satiric edge. When compared with, for example, English jeweler Caroline Broadhead's *Veil Collar* (JI #21), these American pieces seem almost gratuitous. And the persistent inclusion of such self-indulgent items as David Freeda's *Cuban Molasses* pin (#49) or Peter Jagoda's *Spurred on to Excess* (#89) simply baffles me.

The tradition of "found objects," however, retains a good deal of vitality for a number of American jewelers. With collage and assemblage so significant in 20th-century art, it is no wonder that they figure heavily as formal strategies for both Americans and Europeans. But, whereas the European use of found objects tends to derive, to a major extent, from the Church tradition of reliquary objects and a European obsession with primitivism, as Drutt pointed out in the dialogue,[14] American jewelers owe more to the influence of Pop art—a reflection of the detritus of commercial culture—and a desire to make jewelry more personal and less precious. Three jewelers who couldn't produce more different looking jewelry—David Tisdale, Elizabeth Garrison and Debra Rapoport—all find their inspiration in found objects not usually associated with precious jewelry.

There were other pieces I particularly enjoyed. Rachelle Thiewes, who has consistently produced sensuous, superbly crafted body ornament, gives new meaning to the charm bracelet in her *Series Bracelet No. 2* (#184). Jeannette Fossas's

Laurie Hall, *Chief Bone Fish in Bone Fish* necklace, polychrome, bronze, brass, sterling silver, Indian mound beads, abalone, 16×16×2"

flat, subtly textured and supremely simple bracelet, by contrast, reveals the tremendous power available to pure geometric forms. Michele Bussiere's delightful neckpiece comments wryly on jewelry's capacity to project personal "signals"; his *UHF* (#20) is less a neckpiece, really, than a body antenna. With his neckpiece *Delta* (#14), Jamie Bennett moves encouragingly closer to establishing some sort of dialogue between his always serious, but often self-absorbed, autobiographical enamels and the human body. And Pat Flynn's brooch (#45) gives testimony to the fact that an object can be intensely intimate, even if it retains its sense of "objectness." Flynn is exceptional in his ability to coax profound meaning from precious and discarded matter, alike. His inspired compositions establish absolute equivalences between the most unlikely materials and shapes.

As with any craft, jewelers must constantly grapple with, and struggle against, the problems of use and materials—the two phenomena fundamental to craft. But the uses of even the most traditional jewelry are inherently rich in magic, a sense of duration over time and the power of personal expression. More than any other craft, jewelry has the potential to mediate the tension between public and private meaning—and between maker, object and user. Ironically, what most seems to threaten the power of contemporary American jewelry is the success so many of our jewelers have achieved. If "the market" rewards more conservative, benign work, the jewelry-artist's task is to challenge, not appease that market. And the museum's responsibility is to distance maker from market—not simply to relocate "value" from the intrinsic value of materials to the extrinsic value of handcrafted work, but to support only those craftsmen who reveal the same control over dynamic ideas as they demonstrate technically. Large, juried shows serve primarily as showcases, conferring status that parlays into profit. As it becomes more and more difficult for the artist to take an independent stance, the museum should work to counter, not encourage, the leveling effects of the commercial market.

Notes

1. Arline Fisch, Richard Mawdsley, "Jewelry USA" catalog, introductory paragraph, May, 1984.

2. Helen Drutt, "Jewelry International: Contemporary Trends," catalog essay, May, 1984, p. 1.

3. Sharon Church, Helen Drutt, John Paul Miller, "Jewelry USA" catalog, introductory paragraph, May, 1984.

4. Ibid.

5. Robert Lee Morris, as quoted by Vanessa Lynn in "Robert Lee Morris" *Metalsmith*, Summer, 1984, p. 30.

6. Rose Slivka, review: "Britain Salutes New York: New Departures in Jewellery," *Craft* magazine, September/ October, 1983, p. 44.

7. Ibid., p. 45.

8. "Conversation among Selectors of 'Jewelry USA' Show," unpublished transcript of discussion between Sharon Church, Helen Drutt, and John Paul Miller, led by Arline Fisch, pp. 2 & 3.

9. Wayne Higby, "Young Americans in Perspective," *American Craft*, April/May, 1982, p. 24.

10. Frederic Jameson, "Postmodernism and Consumer Society," in *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture*, Edited by Hal Foster, Bay Press, Port Townsend, Washington, 1983. p. 113.

11. John Paul Miller, "Conversation," p. 4.

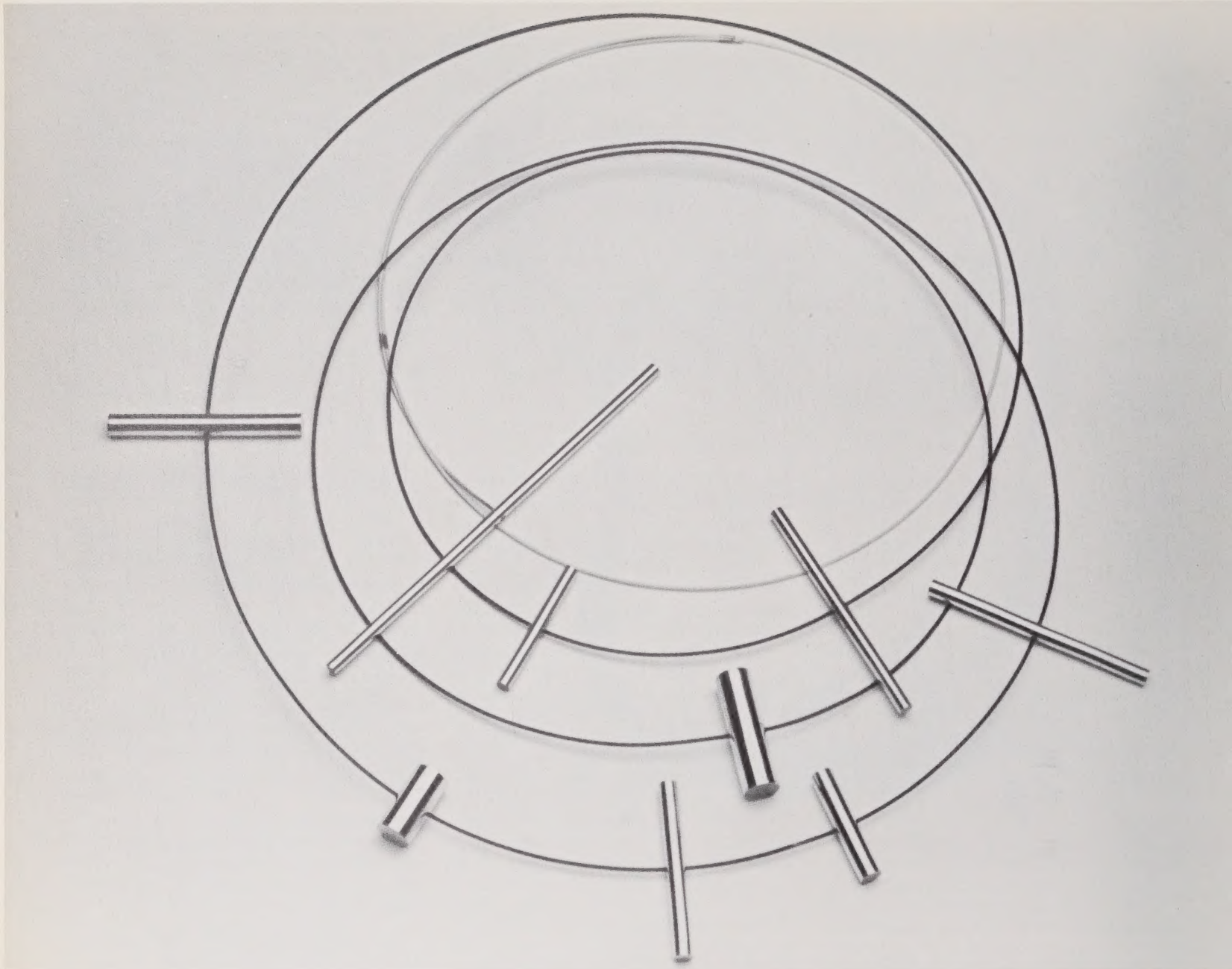
12. John Paul Miller, "Conversation," p. 2.

13. Arline Fisch, "Conversation," p. 2.

14. Helen Drutt, "Conversation," p. 6.

Note: All citations of objects in exhibition or catalog use number designated either by "Jewelry USA Catalog Listing," (#xx) or "Jewelry International Catalog Listing," (JI #xx). ■

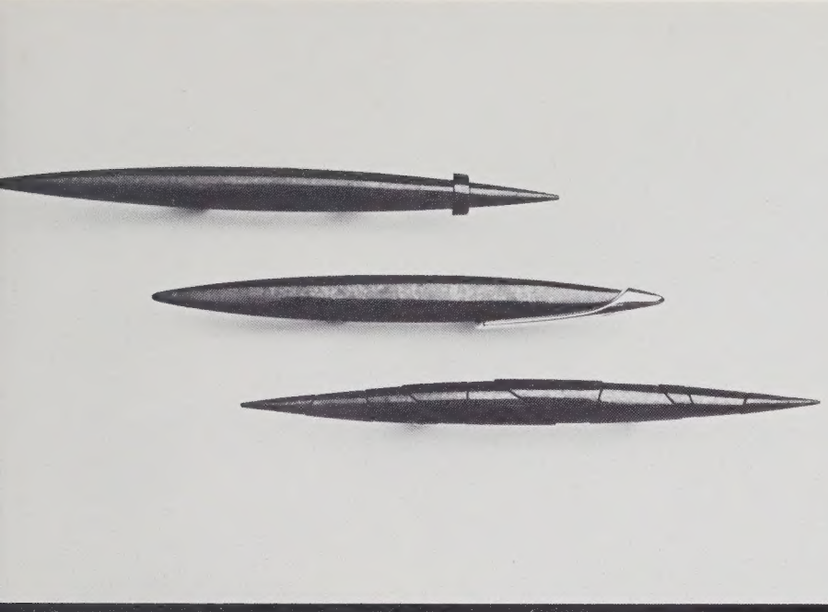
Linda Norden is a PhD candidate in Art History at Columbia University and writes occasionally on art and craft.



First impressions being what they are, sometimes on target, and at other times missing the bull's eye by a wide margin, I couldn't overcome for some time my initial reaction to the "Jewelry USA" and "Jewelry International" exhibitions shown at the American Craft Museum in New York this past summer: the feeling of walking into a labyrinth of artifacts and geographical classifications structured along the lines of the "Library of Babel." Objects like language, or to be more precise, the jewelry in this case (and in the cases) was fractured into a multitude of different mute dialects and then reconstituted into some grand curatorial schema: USA here and International there.

THE JEWELRY INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION: OBSERVATIONS AND OTHER BORDER DISPUTES

by C.E. LICKA



OBSERVATION 1

Not simplicity but more complexity. Expose the layers of relationships. A unified text or essay to let the spectator in on the hermetics of the jewelry world. Score one, at least, for Helen Drutt and the "Jewelry International" catalog.

Opposite page: Therese Hilbert, West Germany, *Neckpiece*, sterling silver, coated wire, 12" diam. Collection: Ivy Ross. Photo: Ralph Gabriner. **Above left:** Kazuhiro Itoh, Japan, *Three Brooches*, granite, silver, 5⅞ × ½" (top and bottom), granite, silver, gold, 5 × ½" (center), 1982. Photo: Ralph Gabriner. **Left:** Suzan Rezak, Czechoslovakia, *Brooch*, sterling silver, 2 × ⅛", 1983. Photo: William Whitehurst. Photos courtesy American Craft Council

OBSERVATION 2

When dichotomies occur, a dialectic is or might be in order. The need for a more dynamic and interactive comparison of pan-European and Japanese styles and concepts to American jewelry developments.

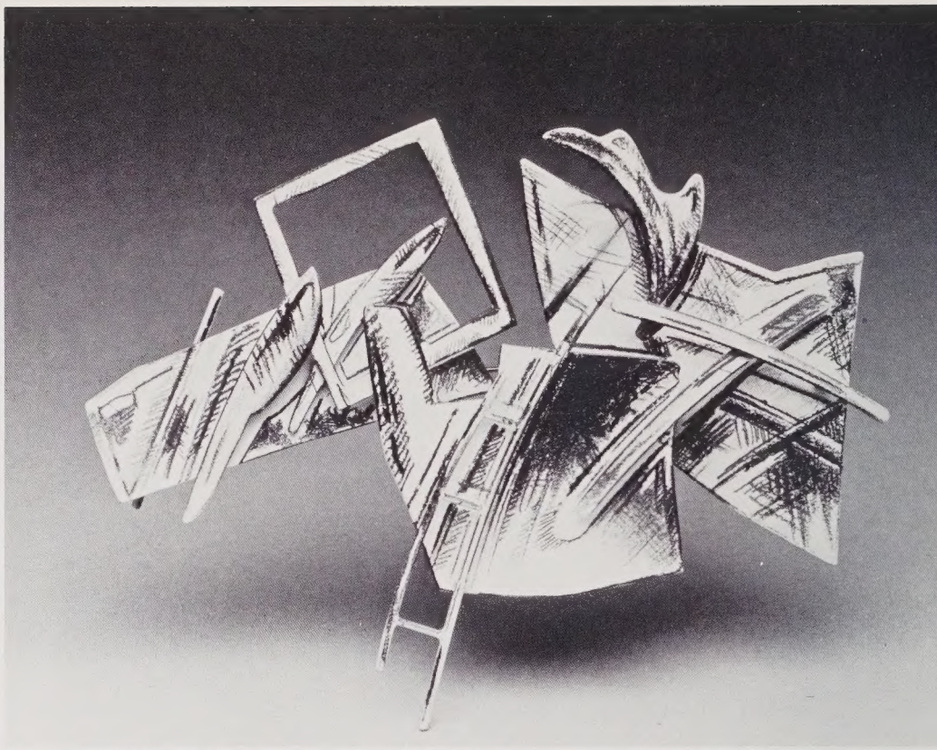
As my disorientation and inertia subsided, I pulled out my mental Baedecker. Recognizable stylistic contours, landmarks and other cardinal points of the mainstream compass materialized and guided me through the varied peaks and valleys of a Whitmanesque landscape of objects in the American section resonating with diversity: stylistic hybrids and appropriations, Modernist and Post-Modernist echoes, techno-romantic probes, but most of all:

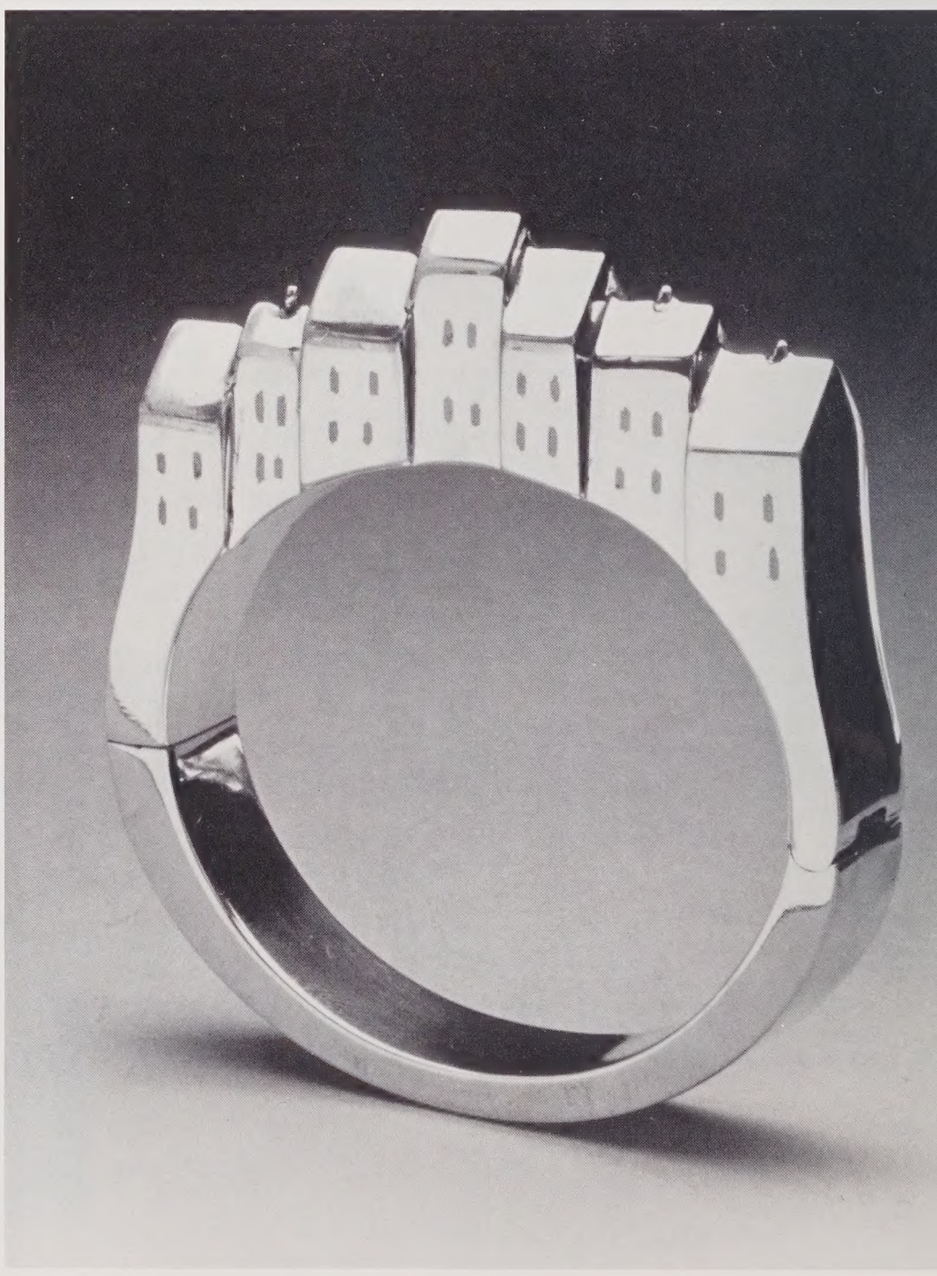
I celebrate myself, and sing myself
(I am large, I contain multitudes.)
I give the sign of democracy
Turbulent, fleshy, sensual, eating,
drinking and breeding

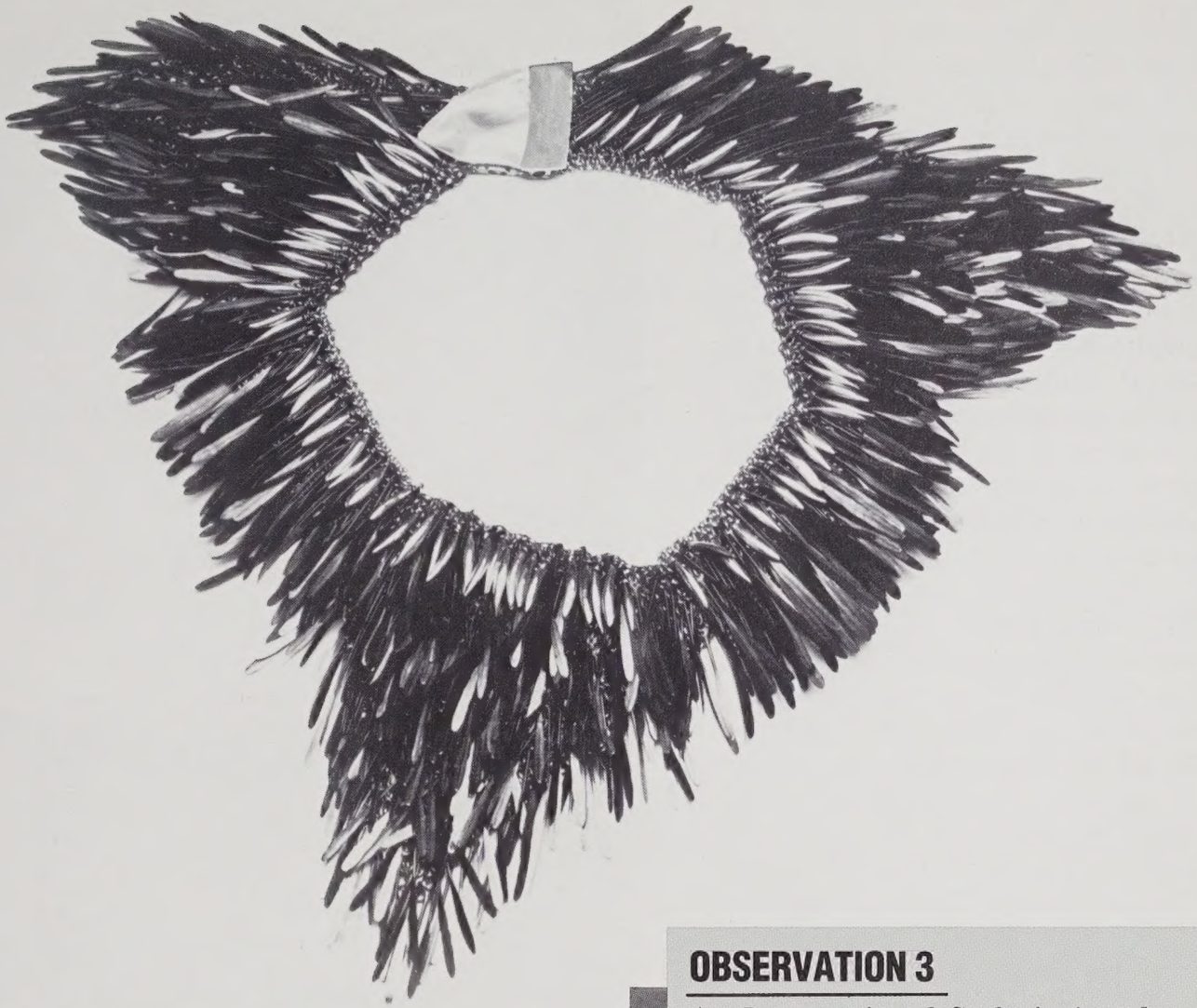
—Walt Whitman, excerpts from "Song of Myself" (from the 1891–92 edition of *Leaves of Grass*)

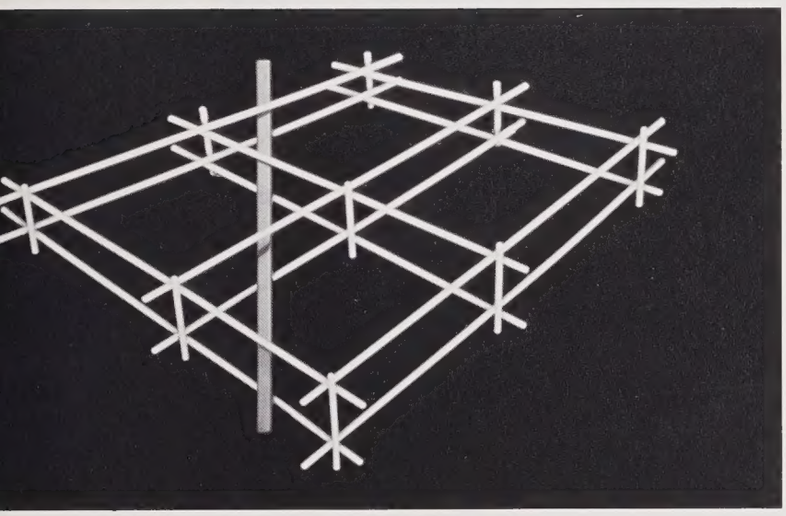
Filtering out the florid rhetoric of banner waving and hyperbole, the poetic centrifuge came to a halt—*breeding,* yes, breeding is the crucial word in describing the American jewelry character.

Approaching the border, the swells of expression seemed to quiet. A kind of silence pervaded the international section. There seemed to be a kind of coherency (possibly due to the fewer pieces selected for this phase of the exhibition). Shadow games with purist and nonobjective geometric configurations were in abundance. An older model, Modernism, was still holding sway. What about the celebrated cause Post Modernism? Had Post-Modernist concerns escaped the European and Japanese jewelers?









Opposite page, top: Manfred Bischoff, West Germany, *Brooch,* sheet metal, paint, 3¾ × 5 × ½". Photo: Ralph Gabriner. **Left:** Tomasz Zaremski, Poland, *Town* bracelet, silver, copper, niello 1984. Photo: Ralph Gabriner. **Top:** Tone Vigeland, Norway, *Necklace,* steel, sterling silver, 18k gold, mother of pearl, 16½ × 1 × 5". Collection: Ivy Ross. Photo: Ralph Gabriner. **Above:** Georg Dobler, West Germany, *Brooch,* steel, brass, acryllacquer, 4½ × 4½ × 1", 1982. Photos courtesy American Craft Council

OBSERVATION 3

An International Style in jewelry—linear, geometric, puristic. Is there an underlying collective attitude that makes it differ from the concerns of the American jeweler? With the given examples in the international section, one would have to argue that a Modernist paradigm was still in operation. It's as if one walked into a geometric and ideal world of Platonic solids. But hasn't the modernist model run its course? Post-Modernist critics argue that it has. Or is Modernism simply one more ideological stylistic strain that has lost its subversive value? Probably all of the above and a lot more. But one thing seems apparent—Post-Modernist attitudes have for the most part been negligible in the case of European and Japanese jewelers.

One thing is for certain, a major difference exists between the international and American jewelers in terms of the assimilation of Pop attitudes. The work of a great many of the American jewelers thrives upon mass media, advertising and consumer fetishism. If there is any sign of Pop attitudes in the international section it is so oblique as to be inconsequential. Of course, it doesn't matter if anyone values Pop beliefs any more than some other stylistic or cultural preference. But it does point to the revolutionary value of Pop art for Americans, and to a certain extent, some British and German jewelers in how it met people's needs without preaching about what art should be. So, in effect, Pop art tended to be experimental and humanistically oriented and capable of increasing one's options in terms of taste.

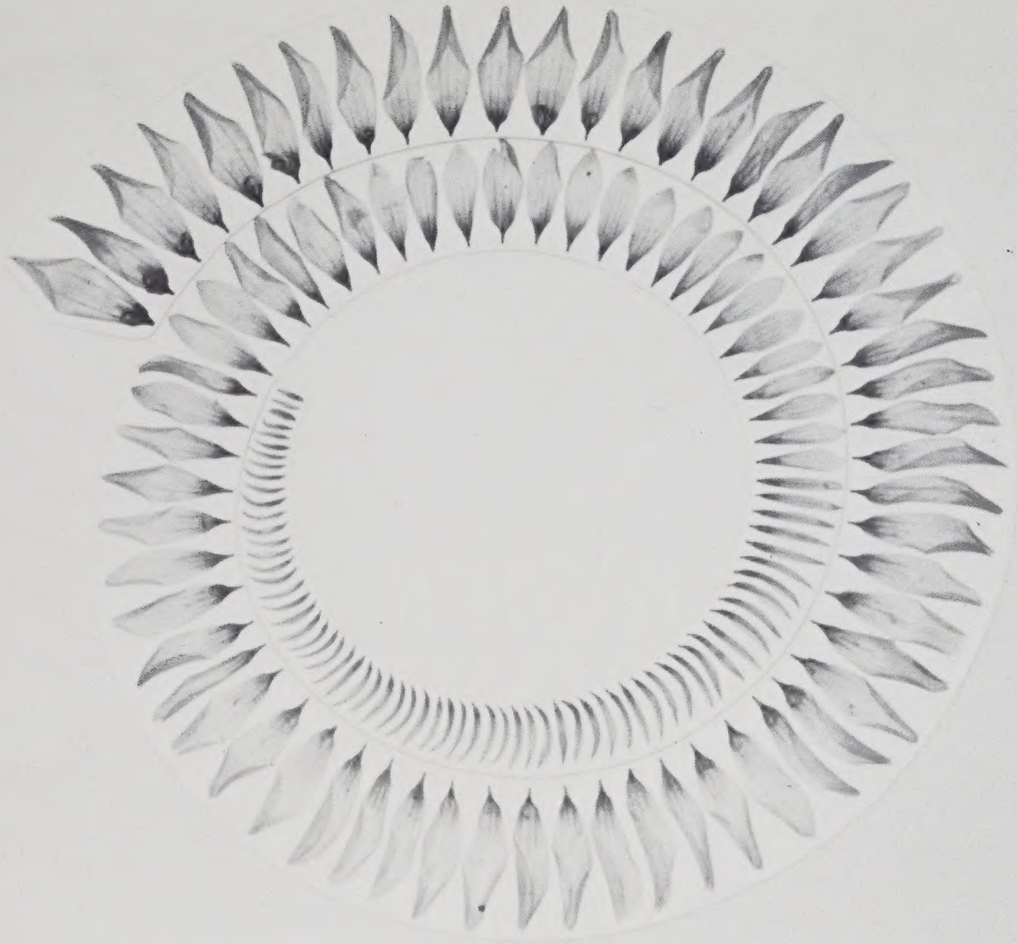
I guess I fell prey to my own biases and fatigue in looking for ruptures, dislocations, anything that might veer from the norm. But can one look for innovations in the crafts? I think so, but it is of a very different order in terms of how ideas and processes are assimilated. I am firmly convinced that there is the possibility to free the intellect in our century from traditional formats. This would lead to the eventual recognition that our cultural sign systems are the product of human whim. In this light, I feel it is important to understand that most change can occur when people play with new signs or critique culture with a serious brand of humor. ■

Above: Otto Künzli, Switzerland, *House* brooch, styrofoam, paper, 3 × 3 × 2¼", 1983. **Opposite page:** Gijs Bakker, Holland, *Chrysant* neckpiece, plastic, dried flower petals, 13" diam. Photos courtesy American Craft Council

A checklist of other jewelers (see visuals accompanying this essay). An admonition: this phase of the essay is not meant to be definitive, but as Roland Barthes would hope for: An exploration into the plurality of texts. The reader should create his/her own text, even criticism. The first step is to realize what Mallarmé pointed out at the end of the last century: All methodology is a fiction.

Fill in the proper word/s into the blank whenever possible.

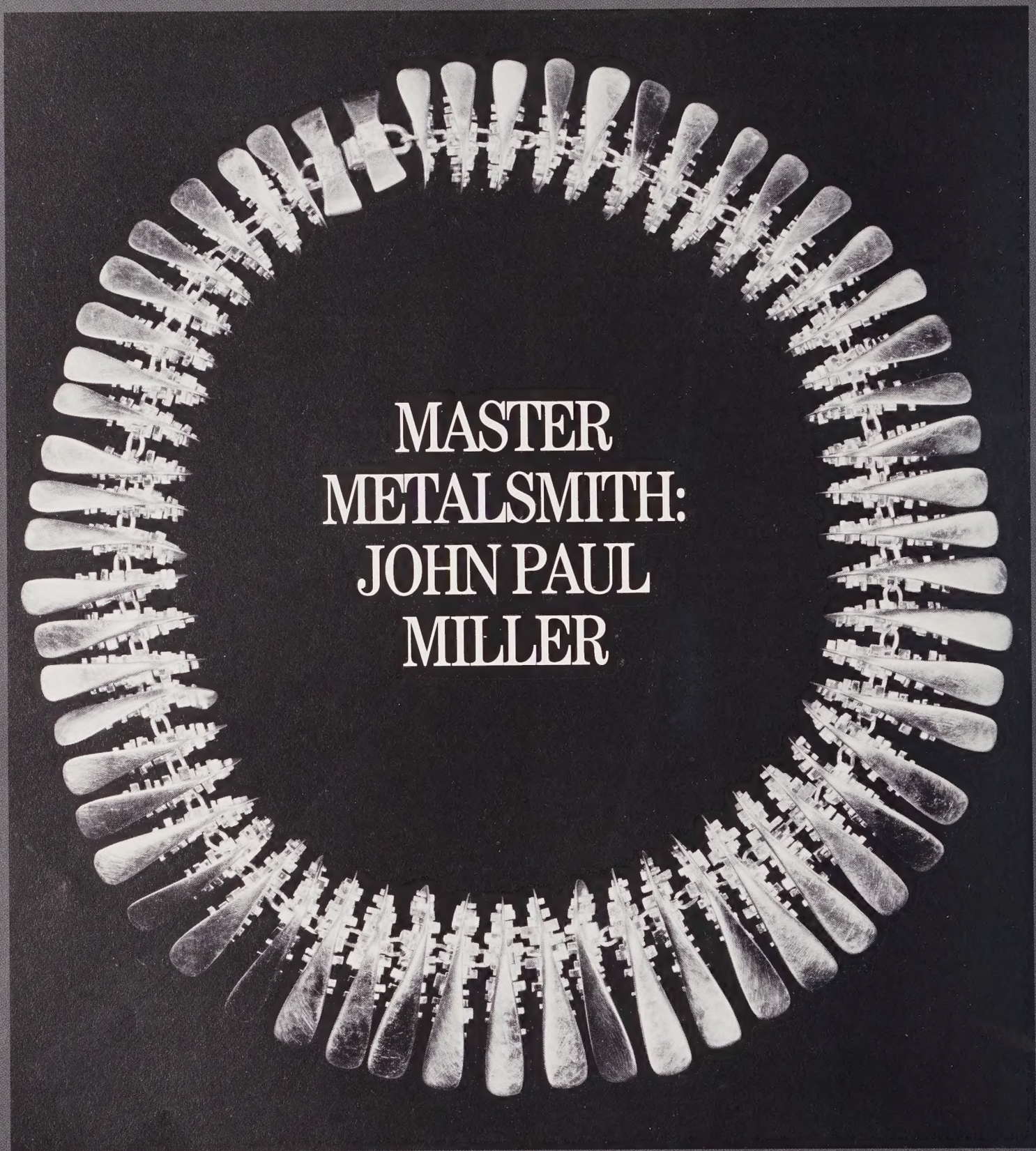
	STYLE	CONCEPT	INNOVATIVE (ANSWER YES OR NO)
Georg Dobler, *Brooch*			
Gjis Bakker, *Chrysant*			
Tone Vigeland, *Necklace*			
Otto Künzli, *House*			
Therese Hilbert, *Neckpiece*			
Kazuhiro Itoh, three *Brooches*			
Tomasz Zaremski, *Town*			
Manfred Bischoff, *Brooch*			
Suzan Rezak, *Brooch*			



OBSERVATION 4

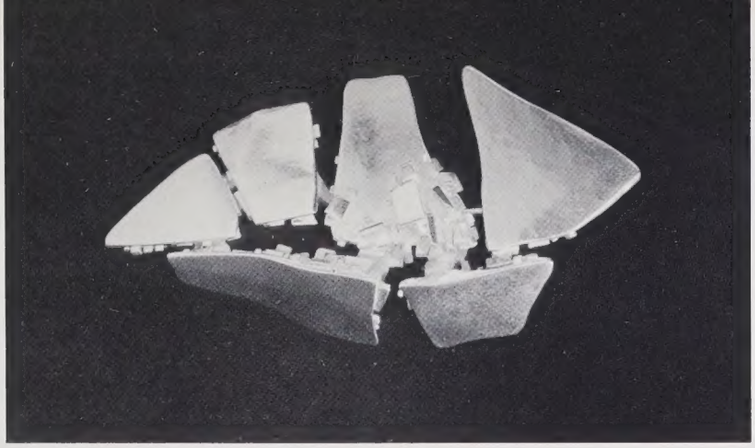
Do Künzli and Bischoff critique cultural values? Are they playing with cultural signs? Monopoly house epaulets, pass go, collect $200. Are these anti-elitist overtures? The concepts, I'm afraid, have transcended their traditional role in jewelry, especially Künzli's jewelry. It, at least, is exploratory and questioning jewelry's role in a European setting. I think Bakker did the same thing with his rubberband jewelry (invisible ornamentation).

Credit for the structural organization and act of appropriation on my part is due to a marvelous book written by Ihab Hassan: Paracriticisms Seven Speculations of the Times. *(Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press), 1975. A color catalog of "Jewelry International" with introduction by Helen Drutt is available from: American Craft Council, Publication Sales, 401 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016 for $7.50, $6.00 to ACC members; NY State residents add appropriate tax.*



MASTER METALSMITH: JOHN PAUL MILLER

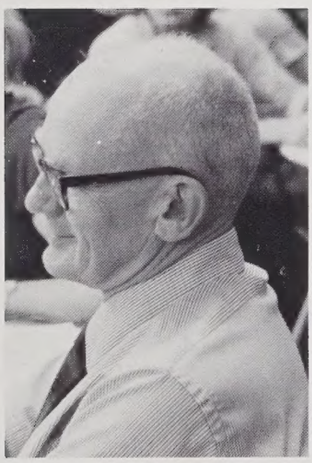
by Roland Crawford



A provocative dilemma evolves when one attempts to use the written word to describe things which are in essence ineffable. This challenge presents itself when trying to describe the artist/teacher John Paul Miller. He rarely makes direct statements for publications or publicity, yet is wonderfully free and open with his time to an inquiring student or friend. He is not a bigger-than-life charismatic personality but rather a quiet, shy man, easily overlooked in a group. John Paul is not one for bathing in the limelight, so we will not find him seeking administrative positions in art or craft organizations. Yet he is known by all who follow the jewelry field, for his work is internationally recognized and honored. He believes in the value of experience and of doing rather than of talking. "My purpose as an artist craftsman is simply to enjoy the experience of working to bring a degree of presence, life and vitality to a form," he simply states.

However, metalwork is only one of many art media that John Paul enjoys. For many years he won awards as a painter and watercolorist while practicing metalsmithing. Jewelry and the visual arts are not his first love, but come after the appreciation of music and nature. John Paul is a well-known exhibition designer and a naturally gifted teacher. During a visit to his home in Ohio I asked him, "Why do you teach?" A wry smile crossed his face: "Teaching allows me a good period of free time each summer to do the most important things." This meant that on the best summer days he would be hiking in the Rockies along a secret path toward a favorite alpine lake, listening to solo piano music on his Walkman recorder.

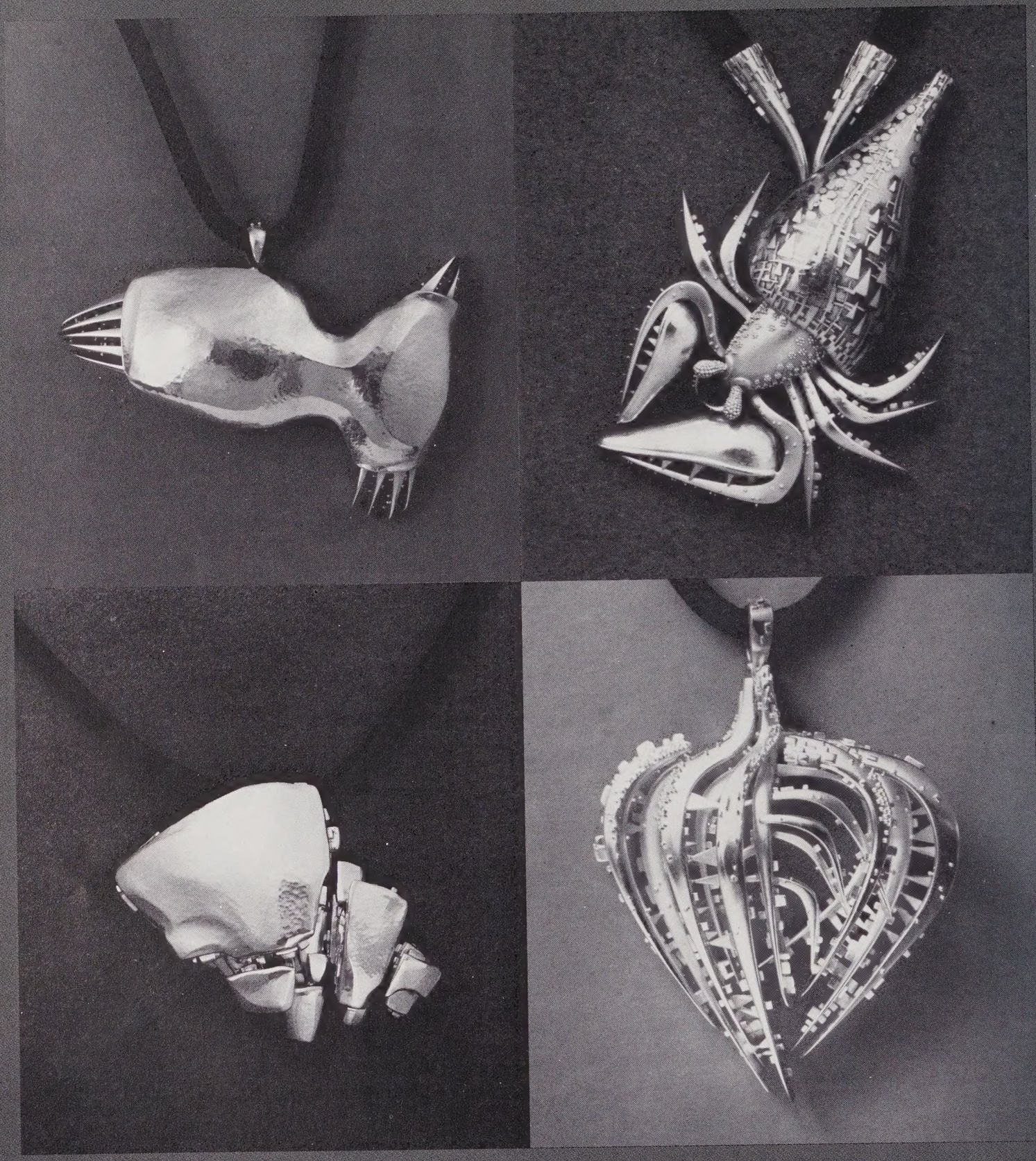
During a springtime visit in the Pacific Northwest, we shared a ferry ride across open water on a very cold day. John Paul looked into the distance until the cold air blinded his eyes with tears and still he did not want to leave the view. Later that day we strolled on a beach of sand and rocks where Miller spent a great deal of time standing over one small tide pool. He brought me a tiny crab to share the splendor of its design. Soon afterward he commented on the composition of a distant cliff-face arrangement. I saw then that he observed and responded to not only the distant but also the close-at-hand with equal enthusiasm.



Nurtured by parents sensitive to the arts, John Paul was supported in his earliest artistic expressions. He was stimulated by teachers such as Kenneth Bates and Viktor Schreckengost at the Cleveland School of Art, growing up in a city with many active craftsmen operating in a climate of public support. In 1936 at the age of 18, John Paul enrolled in the Cleveland Art Institute where, by forced alphabetical student seating, he shared all the classes of his first two years with another Miller, Frederick A. Though of different personalities the two Millers formed a friendship in a climate of artistic support which has fertilized their careers through 40 years to this day. In fact, it is Fred Miller who has to a large extent made this article possible by providing rich and lengthy reminiscences of the friendship. The story of Fred Miller's evolution and career is a worthy study in itself and will be the subject of a future article.

As a student, John Paul was very talented in all aspects of the Institute curricula, with a preference toward watercolors, egg tempera and design. While Fred was completing his first official jewelry class he showed John Paul how to do silver solder with blow-pipe and alcohol lamp. Although John Paul showed an immediate affinity for metalwork, his first love was still watercolors, an idol at the time being John Birchfield.

Opposite page: *Necklace*, 18k gold, 1967. Photo courtesy The Cleveland Museum of Art.
Above right: *Fragments* brooch, 18k gold, 1964. Photo: The Cleveland Museum of Art; John Paul Miller; National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution



After serving in the Army during World War II, John Paul Miller returned to teach design at the Cleveland Art Institute in 1946, while Fred Miller became a designer at Potter and Mellen Company, a fine furnishings and design firm with a complete silversmithing and jewelry shop. As they spent evenings making jewelry at Fred's bench in the shop, they enjoyed the special inspiration that comes from working together. During these years, John Paul used the summers between school terms for travels in the mountains of the western United States. He found favorites in the solitudes and grandeur of Yosemite and in the Wind River Range of Wyoming.

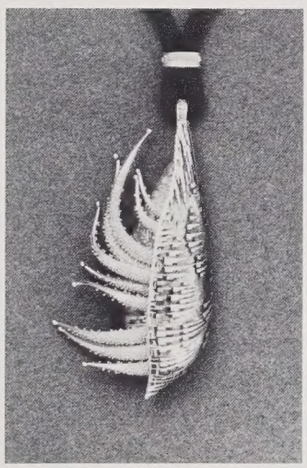
Both Millers attended the early Handy & Harman silversmithing workshops in New York where the Swede Baron Eric Von Fleming provided a rich source of inspiration. They found he was a designer more than a craftsman, encouraging the doing over the cerebrating. The Millers made a film on the stretching process and contributed to some publications for Handy & Harman in 1952. About this time John Paul sold one of his earliest major granulated gold pieces, a beetle form, to the Cleveland Museum of Art. It was the result of many years of personal experimentation in gold granulation, starting in the late 30s and stimulated by photos of the work of Elizabeth

The middle 1950s marked a period of continual expansion for John Paul Miller. An old teaching record from the Institute states that he has taught general techniques, color, design, drawing, watercolor, painting, jewelry and silversmithing. One student advised to explore metalsmithing on a John Paul hunch was John Marshall, who is to this day very thankful for Miller's perception. John Paul has been the Art Institute's Gallery Designer since 1946, overseeing all installations, especially student shows. Over the years he produced three films on silversmithing and jewelry, including a color film on granulation, featuring extraordinary close-up photography of the process. He still is a photographer, avid fisherman, hiker, climber, animal and bird watcher, gardener, cook and a voracious reader.

From his early days at the Cleveland Art Institute to his last years teaching, John Paul has demonstrated that anything worth doing is worth doing well. Fred Miller has said that it is a tragedy that John Paul is so good at so many things; a tragedy that so much of his time is demanded for projects outside of jewelry. John Paul has filled countless sketchbooks with his drawings for jewelry. If a customer brings in a particularly outstanding stone John Paul might do some beautifully rendered sketches of a proposed design. However, the majority of his clients must be content with a position on a long waiting list.

As a teacher John Paul expected only the best from his students. A student had to be committed to meet him halfway and then John Paul would return the energy many times. Creativity was approached in his classes as self-motivated research, catalyzed by his distinct input. He would teach his sophomore design class by showing students slides on the concept of space. In exhibiting clear and pronounced opinions about what he was showing, he encouraged students to do the same in their work. John Paul stressed a conscious looking/designing attitude above and beyond the easier and more common subconscious methods. He helped with down-to-earth advice on the money versus art dilemma, lifting the weight of quandary for many career artist-craftsmen. With uncanny patience John Paul showed students how to be responsible to themselves and their work, in short, how to establish self respect.

John Paul has recently pulled out of teaching to allow more time to pursue his own work. It is a pleasure to watch him at work in his studio, a bright, cheery space he shares with Fred Miller. His approach is steady and direct with a minimum of wasted motion, lacking in useless "in-between" times. He is now able to take more trips, especially to Europe and Scandinavia. He has said that he wishes he had gone to Europe during his youth for the inspirations found in the art of older, richer cultures. He warns any young person to beware of the captivating draw of America's western mountains. He still goes to his favorite places among them, often bringing a younger guest or student to share in the serene glories. My parting image of him does not find him calmly sitting at this workbench, tweezering delicate gold constructions, rather, I see him peacefully paddling a canoe, in a composed attitude of attention, resilient to the forces that move us all. ■



Above: *Cephalopod*, pendant/brooch, pure and 18k gold with enamel, 1970. Photos: courtesy of the artist

Opposite page, clockwise from top left: *Polyp* pendant/brooch, 14k gold, 1963; *Hermit Crab* pendant/brooch, 14k gold, enamel, 1981; *Thorns* pendant/brooch, 18k gold, 1976; *Fragment*, 18k gold, 1972.

FORM AND FUNCTION IN BOOTH DESIGN

by Terri Lonier

Perspective drawing of Whitney Boin's jewelry display booth

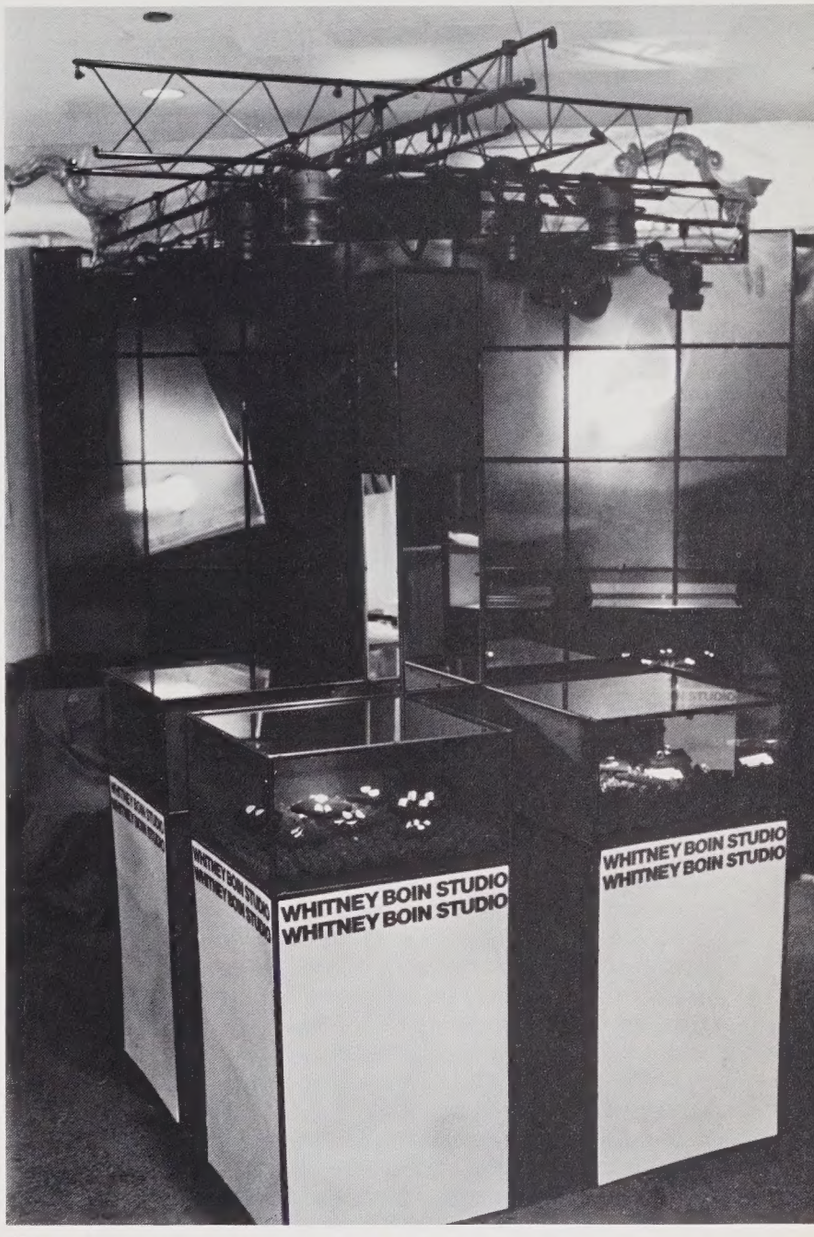
Selling jewelry at national craft fairs and trade shows has become a primary source of income for an increasing number of contemporary metalsmiths. Today's fairs have left behind their amateur image of psychedelic vans in back alleys and wobbly fleamarket cardtables, as evidenced by the more than $8 million in sales generated by the markets in the Rhinebeck, New York area in June, 1983. The challenges for craftsmen participating in one of these large shows go beyond the usual concerns of selling from a private studio. In addition to putting together a line of work that generates sales, show participants must also develop other marketing tools to help their work reach the buying public.

A key component in effective selling and professional presentation of the work is the display setup. The larger fairs and shows often feature several hundred artists conducting business from small 10′ square booths. When faced with aisle upon aisle of artists from which to choose, buyers must make split-second decisions about lingering a few moments to more closely consider an individual's work. The small scale of most jewelry places even greater demands upon a strong visual display, since the work itself cannot draw attention from a distance. Sellers have but a few moments to entice potential buyers before these customers stroll off down the aisle.

While most metalsmiths who participate in these marketing events acknowledge the important role a well-designed booth can play in their overall success, many also admit that booth design is often an item left for last-minute consideration. Faced with increased production demands in preparation for an event, participants often neglect to spend adequate time designing and constructing an attractive and effective selling area. Veterans of the larger craft markets in Baltimore, Dallas, Rhinebeck (now West Springfield) and San Francisco—sponsored by American Craft Enterprises, Inc. (ACE), the marketing subsidiary of the American Craft Council—also acknowledge that the needs and function of an individual's booth often evolve over a long period of time. Conversations with several participants in past ACE fairs and commercial trade shows reveal that some basic understandings about the form and function of booth displays can alleviate many frustrations and lead toward better sales.

The jewelry sales booth, like the work itself, must be a delicate balance between form and function, appearance and practicality. The booth must present the work in a favorable manner without hindering the physical tasks of selling. Philadelphia jewelers Caroline Strieb and Eric Russell explain that the atmosphere of the booth must match the nature of the work. States Strieb: "Your booth represents an integral part of the image you present to the public, and it must coincide with the nature of your work. Someone doing Colonial blacksmithing is not going to do a high-tech display." Noting that "even the best work in the world can look like a rummage sale if it is just thrown into cases," both agree that a simple, uncluttered display showcases jewelry most effectively.

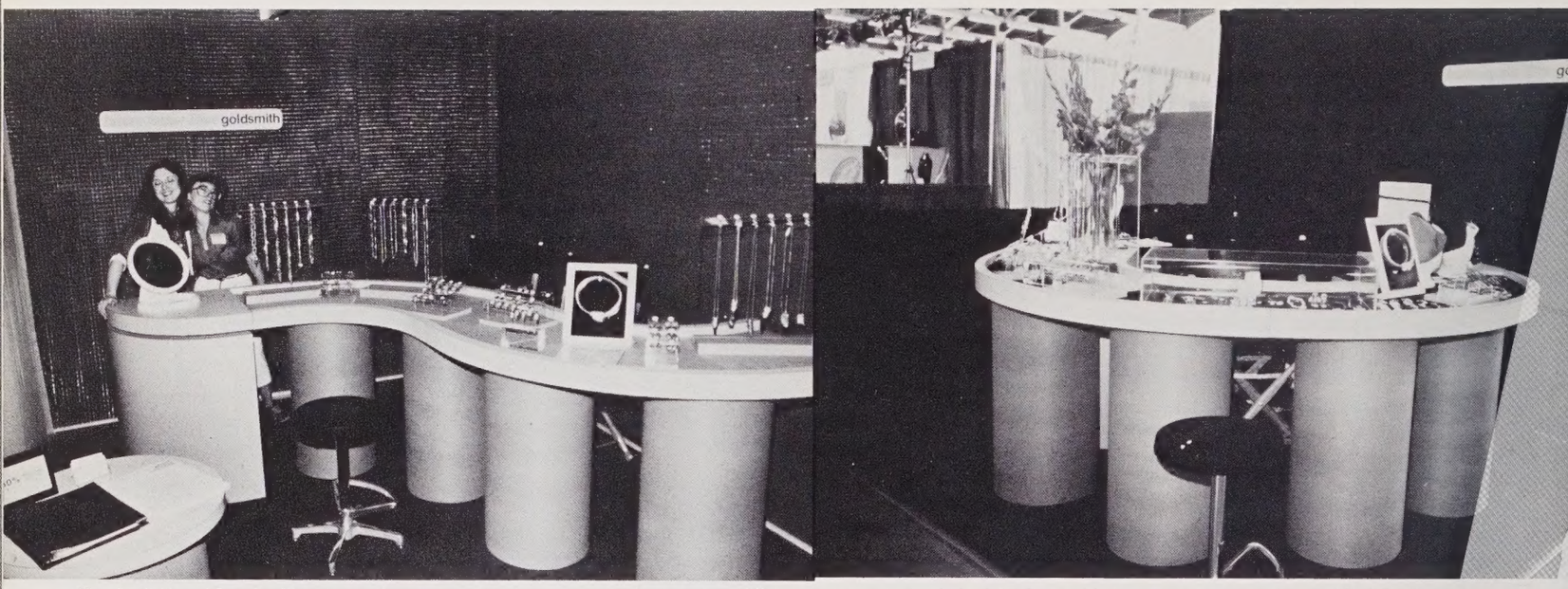
To create visual interest from a distance and draw people into their booths, many artists use oversized photographic enlargements of their work on back and side walls. These images call attention to the work and also give customers a better idea of what the jewelry looks like on the body. Potential buyers are subtly, if unconsciously, transported to the world of high-fashion glamour by identifying with one of the models in the photographs and considering a jewelry purchase. Other artists use actual works to create attention. Russell and Strieb, for example, have constructed a series of three 4′ wall



Whitney Boin's actual booth with track lighting and photographic mural grid on the back wall

cases which prominently display their one-of-a-kind necklaces and pins. Although a bit unwieldy, Russell notes that the cases serve them well, allowing visibility through a crowd of people. "In the cases it's easy to view the work whether you're 5′3″ or 6′3″," he comments. A key part of their case system is its interior fluorescent lighting, which eliminates the two major problems of other kinds of illumination: harsh glare from glass surfaces and shadows created by customers leaning over cases to view the work.

Often it is a general ambience which draws customers into a booth. Working on a limited budget, Deborah Ann Garrison of Ellicott City, Maryland hunted antique stores and flea markets for appropriate yet inexpensive cases. After discovering several im-



The flexibility of Sandra Zilker's booth units enables her to assemble them into different layouts. At the 1981 ACE Dallas Market she constructed a modified S-shaped plan; a year later she opted for a circular format

ported reproductions of antique curved glass cases in a New Jersey warehouse at a good price, she opted to thematically focus her booth on a cozy, at-home environment. An oriental throw rug, an antique arm chair, small end and side tables and a few plants all combine to create what Garrison hopes is a "comfortable and confident atmosphere in which to purchase jewelry from me."

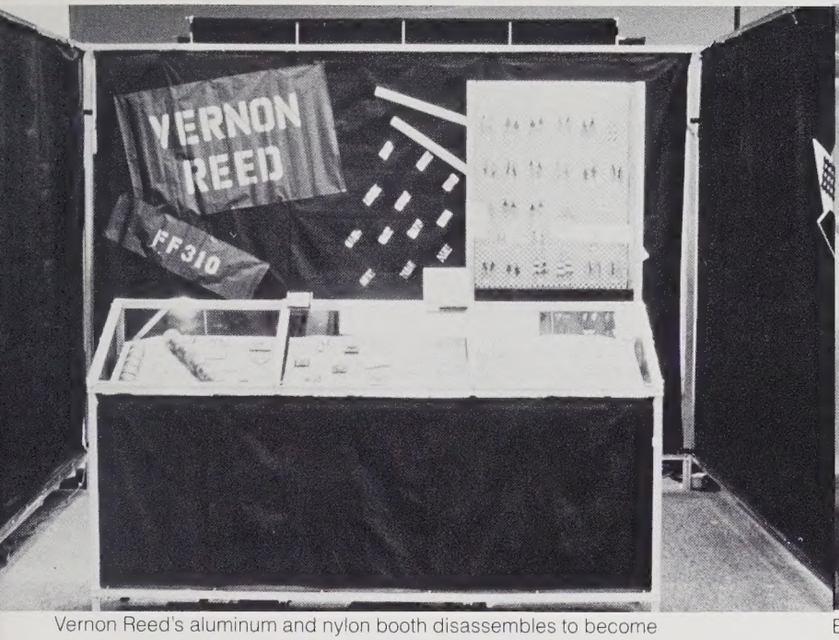
Making the customer feel at ease is only half the challenge when working the long hours a major show demands. Many of the larger wholesale/retail events can run for three to five days, and to survive the grueling demands requires careful planning. In addition to the general tips on color, texture and scale mentioned in the booth display guidelines circulated by ACE, exhibitors are encouraged to consider flooring and lighting requirements. "Standing on concrete and under hot lights for five long days can turn even the most polished salesperson into a Mr. Hyde," comments one experienced fair participant. "Having a carpeted space not only enhances the booth visually, it also helps maintain one's energy level," he adds. A comfortable, high chair, preferably at the same eye level as the passing crowds so that a psychological rapport is achieved, is another basic.

The best booths serve exhibitors during every part of the show cycle. Displays must be portable and compact enought to fit into cars or vans. Ease of transportation is often balanced with setup and breakdown time requirements; the smaller the booth can break down, the longer it usually takes to reassemble. Austin, Texas metalsmith Vernon Reed takes his booth of aluminum C-channel, ripstop nylon and acrylic with him as airline baggage when he flies to distant fairs. While he is pleased with its portability, he also admits that it requires six hours to erect and fill with stock if he is working alone. Similar portability, with an urban flair, is achieved by a pair of New York City metalsmiths who traditionally do the local Lincoln Center craft show: they roll up to the trendy neighborhood with their entire booth display and work in a borrowed grocery cart.

Physical ease in selling should also be a primary consideration. Cases must be designed for easy and quick retrieval of work to present to eager customers, and prices should be in plain view, either in cases or on a price list. Space for displaying business cards, brochures and other printed materials must be designed so they do not hide the work. A separate surface on which to write orders must also be provided, even if it becomes something as mobile as a clip board. Miscellaneous supplies need a storage area hidden from view.

Most of all, display booths must be able to withstand the crush of the public. Horror stories abound of seven-year-olds doing chin-ups on metal display struts and frantic games of tag being played up and down the aisles. Traffic flow must be designed to allow for bustling crowds carrying packages and pushing baby strollers. Access to the work must be easy for the seller, yet protected from theft. Large wall cases must be designed so that all the work is not vulnerable when a single piece is being removed. Cash boxes must also be secure, yet accessible. The public safety factor when dealing with crowds leaning on glass cases in small spaces should also be given careful consideration.

Designing all of these elements into a booth does not necessitate a huge financial outlay, although most show participants realize that the money is a well-spent investment in their business. For the ACE 1984 Dallas fair Vernon Reed abandoned his aluminum and nylon booth for a newer, more substantial display. "Over the past year I have been increasingly aware that my booth, while more than adequate for selling cheap production jewelry, tended to make everything in it look cheap. It did not create a suitable psychological setting for the presentation of state-of-the-art cybernetic jewelry," he explains. "Since that work is important to me, I decided it was time for a new booth." Hiring an outside contractor, Reed spent nearly five times what the former booth cost, creating a monolithic display that has little in common with the previous lightweight unit. Reed noticed the difference after the Dallas fair, stating that the new display showcases the work better and attracts "a better quality buyer. It does exactly what it was designed to do," he adds.



Vernon Reed's aluminum and nylon booth disassembles to become compact enough to travel with him as airline luggage to distant fairs

Bruce Baker's booth design for Baker & Baker, Inc. displays the jewelry on slanted mounts for easier viewing

Another artist willing to take the financial plunge is Whitney Boin, who has participated in the Jewelers of America (JA) international trade shows since July, 1983. Boin, who lives and works in New York City, has created a line of production gold and diamond jewelry aimed at the high end of the market in small jewelry stores throughout the country. He knew that to penetrate the traditional, close-knit jewelry trade in New York he needed a display which presented his work well. After investing two months in designing and nearly $10,000, Boin came up with a stunning display which helped him win the designation of 1983 New Designer of the Year, as well as the President's Award for Best Display of Merchandise. The booth was designed on a diagonal axis for a standard 10′ square space. By altering a commercial Abstracta display unit, Boin created a back wall grid which holds an $8 \times 10'$ photographic mural of his trademark image of a man wearing his cufflinks and a woman's profile showing one of his earrings. A track lighting system, suspended from the back grid and a central mirrored column, dramatically spotlights the space. Floor cases are faced with enlarged photostats of Boin's graphics which prominently display his name and the pinstriping motif which reappears in his jewelry. "Even though the expense and time in creating this booth was phenomenal," Boin explains, "I felt it was well worth it. I knew I had this one chance to present myself to the trade in a professional manner, and I was unwilling to let it go by, or to gradually improve my booth over the next few years of doing the show." Like Reed, Boin feels confident that his investment will serve him well, and that it is flexible enough to change as his work develops. "The whole atmosphere of the booth could change with a different photographic mural and graphics," he adds.

While not as expensive, Sandra Zilker's booth also features flexible modular units which allow her to create several different layouts. A two-part curved countertop combines with wedge-shaped cabinets to become either a modified S-shaped display or a circular format. The units rest on felt-covered sono tubes and the work is shown on custom-made wood and plastic units. Such flexible approaches also enable exhibitors to adapt to a variety of floor spaces; while the standard booth size is generally 10′ square, variations of a foot or more are not uncommon and can make havoc with a display if it is not planned accordingly.

Outdoor booths present another set of demands based on weather factors. Displays must be stable enough to withstand strong winds or the weight of water on canopies. Air must circulate from front to back, but the rear must not be accessible to the public. (A roll-up bamboo screening backdrop was one exhibitor's solution.) Plastic sides that can drop quickly in case of an unexpected shower are also a good design element. The extension of the roof line to direct water away from the cases is a necessity. Speaking from experience, Eric Russell suggests at least a 10″ overhang. "When people are looking at your work and water starts dripping down their necks, they go crazy—and they leave immediately," he explains.

For most craftsmen, booth displays evolve as marketing experience grows and discoveries are made about what works best. While booths must be designed for durability—knowing that paint chips and plexiglass scratches—displays should also allow for flexibility and expansion. Few booths emerge completely resolved for a first-year exhibitor. In fact, many participants acknowledge satisfaction from the challenge and excitement of keeping their booth design currrent. As Caroline Strieb comments, "Eric and I felt we had put together a good booth at the 1983 Rhinebeck fair when so many of our fellow exhibitors complimented us on it. But when buyers who had been our customers there the previous year began asking if we had done the fair before—we knew we finally had a booth which made an impact!" ■

Arts marketing specialist Terri Lonier writes frequently on topics about the arts and business. She also edits the annual Journal for NCECA (the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts).

A CONVERSATION WITH ANGELA CUMMINGS

by Jabez L. Van Cleef
photographs by Andy Grundberg

In October of 1983 Angela Cummings announced that she would end a 16-year association with Tiffany & Company in order to seek other opportunities, either as an independent jewelry designer or working under the auspices of another upscale retailer. Immediately, business analysts set about defining what this decision meant for the image and future image of her former employer, which has been, since 1979, a subsidiary of Avon Products, Inc.

The Wall Street Journal speculated that her departure might be symptomatic of a loss of the Tiffany "mystique" and mentioned rumors afoot that Elsa Peretti would also be leaving. Then *The New York Times* ran a profile of Mrs. Cummings which illuminated some of the circumstances leading up to the break. In these and other articles, she was subjected to a degree of public scrutiny that, she says, in retrospect, was unexpected but not altogether surprising. "I don't mind publicity," she says now. "But, I certainly wouldn't allow the possibility of public exposure or newspaper coverage to influence what I did or said. This is particularly true if the story is about my work."

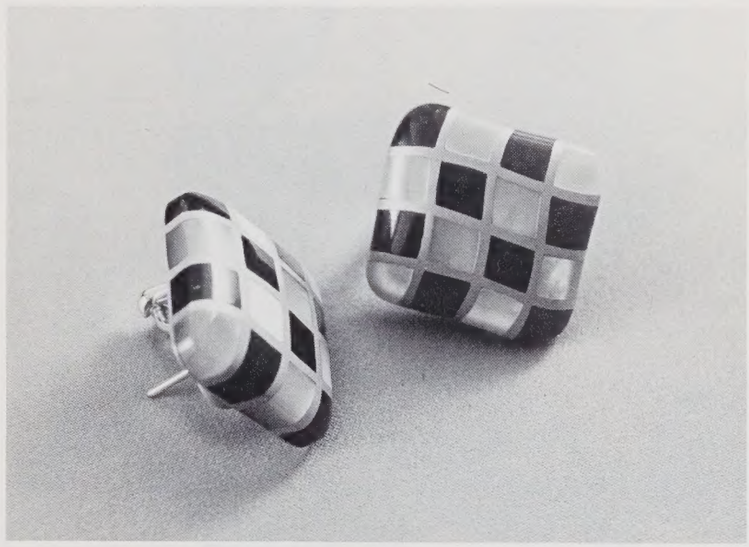
Over the years, Angela Cummings's work has attracted the requisite array of adjectives trying to capture its essence: "nature-inspired," "lavish," "painstaking," "subtle," "spectacular." Perhaps more important than words from the professional's point of view, is her work's remarkable popularity with an affluent market: According to the *Times* article, in 1982 her designs accounted for a total of more than 45,000 sales, generating total revenues of about $10 million. In 1983 these figures were expected to increase by 20 per cent.

How does one person contrive to design, fabricate and market several million dollars worth of jewelry every year? Having reached what would seem to many to be the absolute pinnacle of her profession, why would she choose to leave it for an uncertain future? When playing for such high stakes, do the constraints of spreadsheets and market trends tend to influence artistic decisions? These were a few of the questions which came to mind as we followed Mrs. Cummings across the threshold into her new career.

Our meeting took place in the Palm Court at the Plaza Hotel just before Christmas, 1983. Mrs. Cummings was immersed in preparations for introducing a completely new collection of work at Bergdorf Goodman, scheduled for opening on Valentine's Day two months later. We sat and talked for a couple of hours and made arrangements to come and see the new pieces sometime in the spring. The following is a freely edited report of our conversation, interspersed with photographs of some pieces from the new collection taken later at Bergdorf's. (All Angela Cummings jewelry designed since October of 1983 is available exclusively through Bergdorf Goodman as of June, 1984.)

METALSMITH: How would you define your relationship with Bergdorf Goodman?
AC: I call it a "buy-sell" arrangement. They buy the pieces directly from me and then decide how much they want to charge for them. With this type of arrangement I have complete freedom to design whatever I want for them. They may provide me with information about what they feel will be happening in the fashion world six months or a year from now, but I honestly don't pay too much attention to that when I'm designing a new piece.

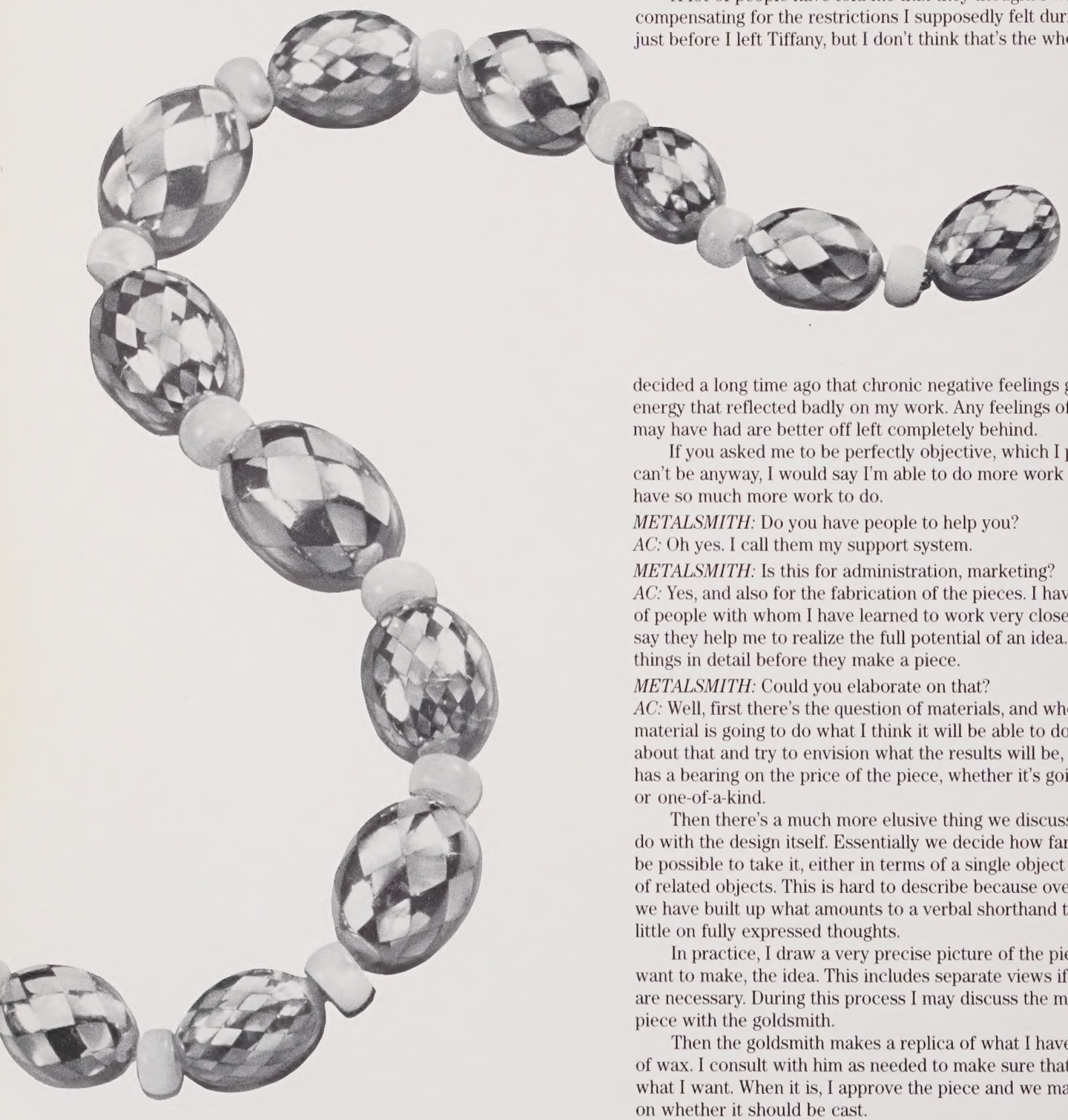
On the other hand, they have been extremely cooperative in accepting my creative input. They are setting up a sales area devoted exclusively to my work. This involves extensive renovation which they have been only too willing to do, and they have been most amenable to any suggestions I might have relating to display and visual merchandising.



Earrings, 18k white gold with matte finish and nacre

METALSMITH: Do you expect to do as much work with Bergdorf as you did with Tiffany?
AC: More. Much more, when I think about it. For one thing, I am committed to introducing two completely new collections during 1984: one in February and one sometime in the fall. Cumulatively, this means that I will be creating three complete collections of work, with over 100 pieces in each collection, within the span of a year. Right now I'm working 17 or 18 hours a day, but I don't seem to suffer much from fatigue.
METALSMITH: Why not?
AC: I think it's because the creative energy sort of fuels itself. For the first time, I can take an idea and follow it through as far as it will possibly go. This means that many more actual pieces will grow out of a single idea, but it also means that I can only do my best if I can retain my concentration from beginning to end.

A lot of people have told me that they thought I was compensating for the restrictions I supposedly felt during the time just before I left Tiffany, but I don't think that's the whole truth. I



decided a long time ago that chronic negative feelings generated an energy that reflected badly on my work. Any feelings of frustration I may have had are better off left completely behind.

If you asked me to be perfectly objective, which I probably can't be anyway, I would say I'm able to do more work because I have so much more work to do.

METALSMITH: Do you have people to help you?
AC: Oh yes. I call them my support system.
METALSMITH: Is this for administration, marketing?
AC: Yes, and also for the fabrication of the pieces. I have a network of people with whom I have learned to work very closely. I would say they help me to realize the full potential of an idea. We discuss things in detail before they make a piece.
METALSMITH: Could you elaborate on that?
AC: Well, first there's the question of materials, and whether a given material is going to do what I think it will be able to do. We talk about that and try to envision what the results will be, and all of that has a bearing on the price of the piece, whether it's going to be cast or one-of-a-kind.

Then there's a much more elusive thing we discuss that has to do with the design itself. Essentially we decide how far it's going to be possible to take it, either in terms of a single object or a "cluster" of related objects. This is hard to describe because over the years we have built up what amounts to a verbal shorthand that relies very little on fully expressed thoughts.

In practice, I draw a very precise picture of the piece that I want to make, the idea. This includes separate views if I think they are necessary. During this process I may discuss the material for the piece with the goldsmith.

Then the goldsmith makes a replica of what I have drawn, out of wax. I consult with him as needed to make sure that it's exactly what I want. When it is, I approve the piece and we make a decision on whether it should be cast.

Finally, after the piece is fabricated, we discuss the finish of the metal and the goldsmith may present me with some options, but

generally we have an object that is exactly what I envisioned it would be.

METALSMITH: Would you say that any characteristics grow out of the process of making the object itself?
AC: No, not really. I see each finished piece as one of my own ideas made into a three-dimensional object. It has the shape of my thought. In fact, the precision of bringing a shape into reality is for me much greater now than it was 18 years ago when I was getting started. I think I am better now than I was then.

METALSMITH: Where does the thought come from?
AC: Intuition. Something inside of me that I have learned to trust. Not knowing enough to know that I can't do something. Balancing things that don't match, like that business in E.M. Forster's *Howard's End* about "only connect."

I suppose that in all modesty I ought to add that I don't feel that any of my ideas is ever perfectly realized; but, I think I'm very good about knowing when to stop.

METALSMITH: Is that why you left Tiffany? Because it was time to stop?
AC: There are always questions. You may not believe it, but even I have questions. "Why did you leave Tiffany?" there are lots of answers and yet there isn't a single answer.

About two years ago I began to experience something about my work as *pressure.* Outwardly everything looked and felt the same. In the course of following a design through to completion, displaying it and ultimately selling it, I would expect to encounter conflicts—that's not the issue, I'm not a tyrant—but strangely, after all those years, I saw that in fighting to assert my point of view I was not being given an honest battle.

The pressure began to show in my work. Keep in mind that this is hindsight, that it's easy to say now something was a constant nagging thing, while then I may have consciously thought about it only one day in ten. Still, with this business of having the rules changed, the unfair battle, I felt perhaps certain restraints that were new or that I hadn't noticed before: what's the difference, I felt restrained. And by a mysterious process, my collections for those two years were expressions of a need to protect myself. To me they looked like fortresses, like armor.

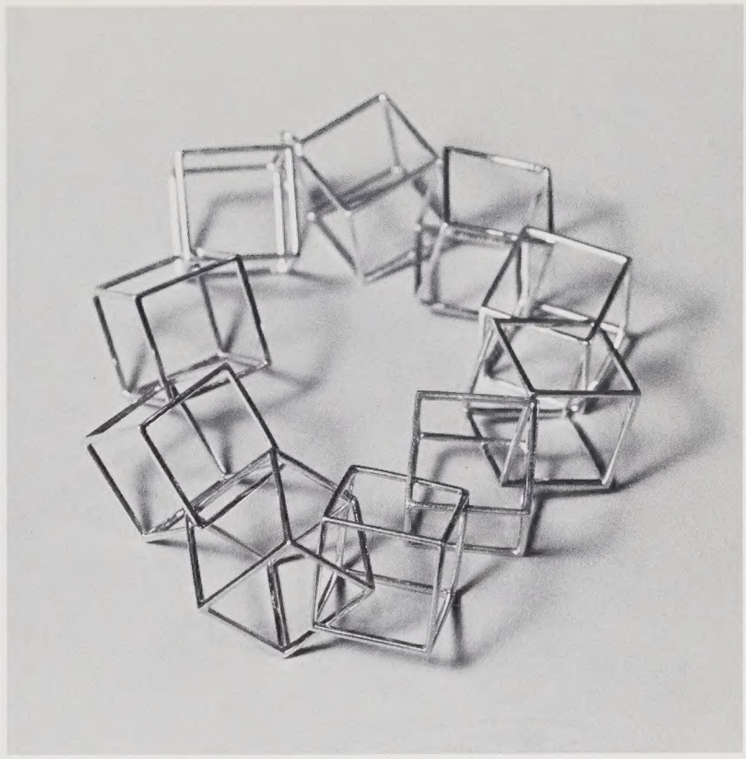
Even when I noticed that, I still hadn't decided what to do, but I had decided that I was going to do something. Ultimately what made me leave was a realization of who and where I was. I had come a long way with a great company, but where was the future? The idea of simply piling up collection on collection over the years in my nice safe little nook filled me with loathing. I had to get out on my own.

Of course this level of explicit analysis for what motivates me is extremely unusual. I rarely express the ideas behind my actions or my work—is there a distinction?—except by a sort of verbal shorthand. I use what almost amounts to a private language when I'm working with the people who fabricate my designs, we've been working together for such a long time.

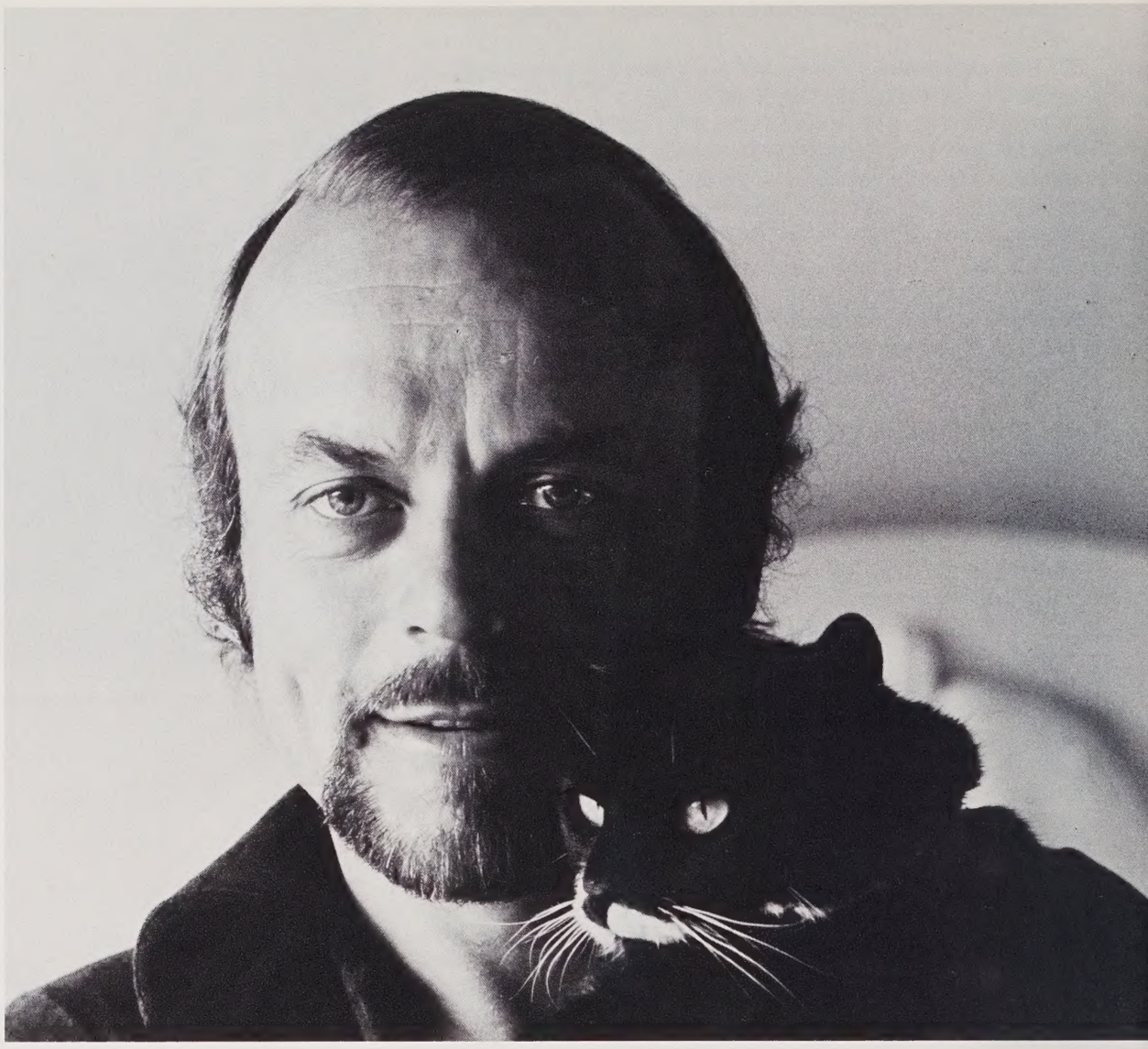
I might just as easily have answered the question "Why did you leave Tiffany?" by saying "My heart is more comfortable with asymmetry." And let you plumb the depths of that. Once the break was made, a flood of feelings just picked me up and carried me off. The excitement of being on my own is absolutely tremendous. I feel as if I have understood some timeless idea, that the artist in me works best when she is least secure. I know this will sound vain, but I think the emotional turmoil of severing with Tiffany has made my work much more interesting to look at. Of course it's too early to tell and who am I to say, but that's what I think.

Maybe the best thing is to try to answer the other question: "What would have happened if Angela Cummings had stayed at Tiffany?" I can close my eyes and imagine it and it's like a gray steel wall or something—no features, nothing. It's a meaningless question. I couldn't have stayed there." ■

Jabez L. Van Cleef writes about design, engineering and marketing for an industrial public relations firm in Manhattan.



Opposite page: Necklace, 18k gold and nacre. **Above:** *Bracelet,* 18k gold



WECKSTRÖM ON WECKSTRÖM

by Ettagale Blauer

Björn Weckström, a Finnish designer who has enjoyed a virtually unparalleled opportunity in his native country, was the keynote speaker at the recent Society of North American Goldsmith's conference held in New York City. In an interview conducted before his talk, Weckström discussed his own unique position and his views of the jewelry world. Because he has had a nearly 20-year long relationship with the Finnish jewelry company Lapponia, Weckström has had the luxury of being a house designer with very few restrictions. He has been, and remains, free to pursue other design areas such as glass, ceramics and furniture, always knowing that his work for Lapponia would give him a financial base. But this security is a double-edged sword; Lapponia demands that Weckström's new designs bear a strong family relationship to those that came before. Perhaps this restriction has been responsible for his curious lack of interest in what is going on in the rest of the jewelry world. And most peculiar, in light of his invitation to speak before this particular group, is his lack of awareness of the contemporary goldsmith's move to bridge the gap with the world of commercial jewelry.

Weckström's association with Lapponia began in the 1960s. It is a tribute to his vision that his sculptural designs look as contemporary today as they did 20 years ago. But that may also be a tribute to the Scandinavian customer who, he says, is open to new design. This is not true of the local Finnish retailer, however, who is very much like his American counterpart. In the beginning Weckström could

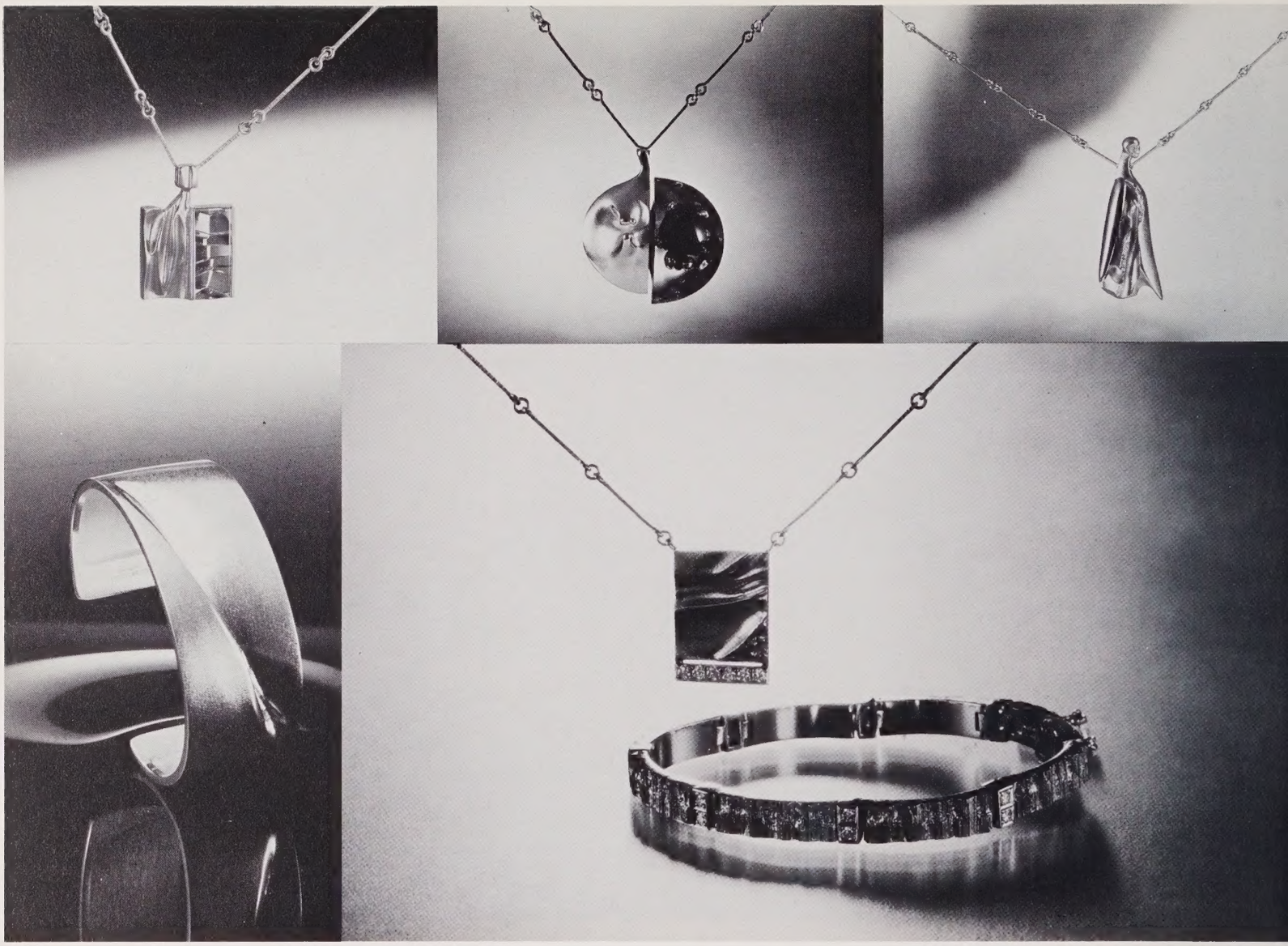
not find jewelry retailers who would carry his work. In order to break through, he opened his own retail shop in 1959 where he sold his own work as well as that of his colleagues.

Also influencing his thoughts on design is his move, two years ago, to Italy, where he spends most of his time working on full-size sculptures. The move reflects one of the major problems of life in Finland—the lack of light in winter. At the height of winter, life is lived nearly in total darkness, with the sun crawling across the horizon for barely two hours a day. Working on sculpture one day, jewelry the next and glass or dinnerware the third is beneficial, he says. "Creativity increases with the number of media you are using."

Although not primarily concerned with jewelry today, Weckström has a clear sense of what jewelry is all about, why it exists and what it means for the customer. He sees jewelry's role in the contemporary scene as a kind of social signal. "It's pre-verbal communication. It's like clothes, it reveals our social attitudes, education level. It's practical, it cuts down time." And he sees in jewelry the shift in social attitudes from the 1960s to the present. "The 60s were very optimistic. Men were wearing open shirts with lots of chains. Then the energy crisis came and optimism went down. People were scared. Men were all closed up with ties. The situation changed totally, and in a very short time. We thought—'tomorrow won't be better.' Now, slowly, the optimism comes back."

But there are other factors influencing jewelry designs, he says. "It's hard to sell big diamonds now. Now people want to show that they have culture. Just to have money is not very smart anymore." This is another example of the way jewelry gives off social signals. Beyond this, Weckström notes that in countries where men have more influence, they buy diamonds for their women, to show they have money. Where women are more influential, then interesting design becomes more important, because the women have more to say about the jewelry they wear.

Above: *Tenochtitlan* necklace, designed for Lapponia Jewelry, Helsinki, gold, 1981. **Left:** *Eldorado* watch, designed for Lapponia, gold with ETA quartz movement, 1982. Photos courtesy Lapponia Jewelry Oy, Helsinki, Finland



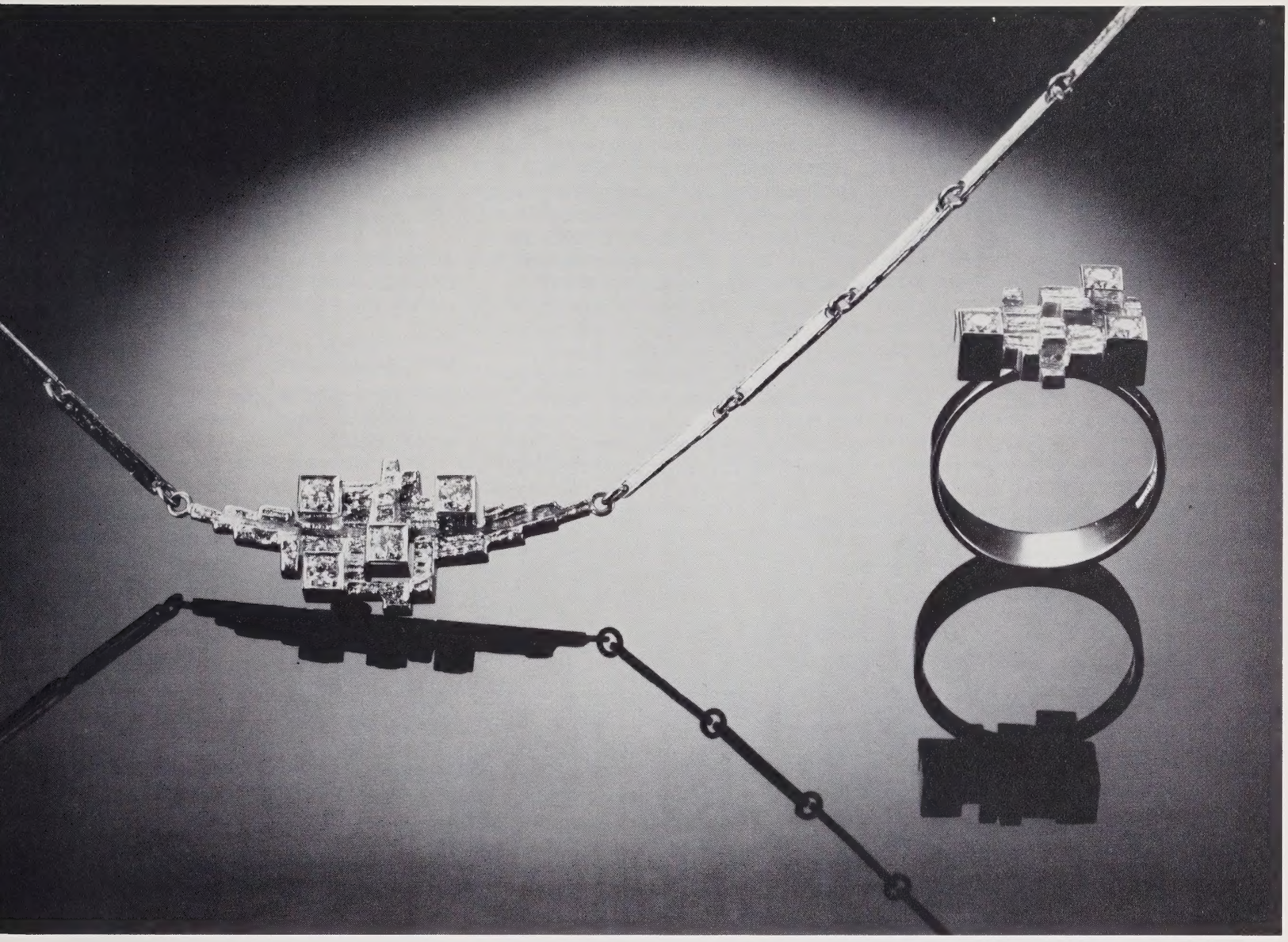
In addition to its role as a mirror of the level of optimism, Weckström also sees jewelry choices reflecting changes in lifestyle. "During the 1960s, people went home from work and changed clothes to dress up when they went out. The lifestyle changed very much after the 60s. People went right from the office to the party. Jewelry had to function all day and into the evening." In a purely design sense, Weckström sees everything as sculpture, and jewelry is a miniature version of that art form. "It functions with a human background instead of architecture and nature. I am a sculptor. Whatever I do, they are usually sculptures. The only restriction is that it has to function against a human body."

In Finland, as in the United States, there is a split between academic and practical teaching. Finland has a goldsmiths' school based on handicraft and an academy to produce metalsmiths. "I went to the goldsmiths' school; it was more practical." Still, he doesn't feel it makes that much difference. "No school is so bad that it can spoil a good designer." This same comment made during his address evoked laughter and applause.

His complaints about the restrictions placed on him both by Lapponia and by the social climate of Finland were less well received. He enjoys a unique success, which he describes as a peculiar burden to bear. "In the Scandinavian countries, success is a very undemocratic thing, particularly commercial success. Artists think that the public cannot understand something and if they do, it cannot be good." However, he also complains about having to do similar designs all the time for Lapponia, because people want to be able to recognize the work when they come into the store. Of course it's difficult to have sympathy with this problem; if he doesn't want the security of Lapponia, he could simply not do those designs that he says chafe him so much. That work acts as a patron for the sculpture he is now devoted to, and he acknowledges that.

"For a designer, it's a great thing to have a corporation that can be the producer. He can make through that producer unique things too, things that he can use for promotion. He can experiment with metals and everybody benefits. The customer gets better things." There are hazards to working in both small companies and large, he says. "In a small company, everybody interferes with the design. In the large company, you have to force yourself into a style that is not yours. The design is too unrealistic and too difficult to produce.

His own early jewelry designs put too much emphasis on the sculptural aspect. "In Scandinavia 25 years ago, I was doing this silver jewelry that was very hard to wear. It was great looking in showcases but often a great disappointment when it was put on." Over the years, his pieces have become smaller. "The structure has become less pronounced. The size has become smaller because of the cost of materials as well as fashion. When I started, gold was just a pale reflection of silver designs. But gold has to have a totally new form of language, a new color, a new texture. I wanted to create



a product that was as strong as possible. Gold is a very hot medium, full of passion and history."

This consistent way of thinking has kept some of his designs from the 1960s in production today. The secret he says, is that although the pieces are serially produced, they do not look it. "I really made it the way I wanted, without looking to see if it was salable. It became successful because it was so commercially unsalable. It looks very human—you don't have a feeling of a machine." Yet when he creates a new design now, he must think about it in terms of an edition of 500 pieces. And, he adds, "serial production is very brutal. The first model is very sensitive; in production, all the magic is gone."

One problem the Finnish designer does not have to face is that of jewelry theft—it just isn't a consideration for someone who might like to wear a big, showy gold piece. But the great emphasis on a truly democratic society in Finland eliminates the show-off customer. "People don't like wearing very showy jewelry. They try to be as modest as possible to be accepted."

The tremendous variety and quantity of new ideas in art that are available to the American designer, particularly in centers of activity such as New York, are a pleasure for him to see, but he offers a caution about them. "You show new things so quickly here. Every art movement breaks a new channel; everything that happens is welcome. But it's not necessary that it is permanent. You should be careful about putting up monuments to it."

Twenty-five years ago, Björn Weckström opened his own gallery in Helsinki. It has continued through the years, and today he sells his own sculpture, glass and jewelry there. It puts him into direct contact with the customer. "I learned a lot through that. I learned how underestimated the customer is—they are really you and me." ■

Ettagale Blauer is a jewelry writer and contributing jewelry design editor for Modern Jeweler.

Opposite page, clockwise from top left: *Spectra* pendant, gold with amethyst citrine, 1982; *Kilimandjaro* pendant, sterling silver with acrylic, 1974; *Lord of Insects*, white and yellow gold, 1980; *La Scala* pendant, gold with diamonds, 1982; *Kharis* bracelet, sterling silver, 1980. **Above:** *Spitsbergen* pendant, gold with diamonds, 1983. All designs for Lapponia Jewelry. Photos courtesy Lapponia Jewelry Oy, Helsinki, Finland

Reticulation and Heat Coloration of Shakudo and Shibuichi

by Diane Egbert

Introduction

For a number of years I have been exploring the use of the Japanese alloy shakudo in ways other than mokume-gane. I was interested in its coloring properties and use in marriage of metal. In 1982, I started coloring it with heat rather than chemicals, finding this gave a wider range of colors. The iridescent quality and vivid blues of the shakudo remained fairly stable and were easily reproduced for production pieces.

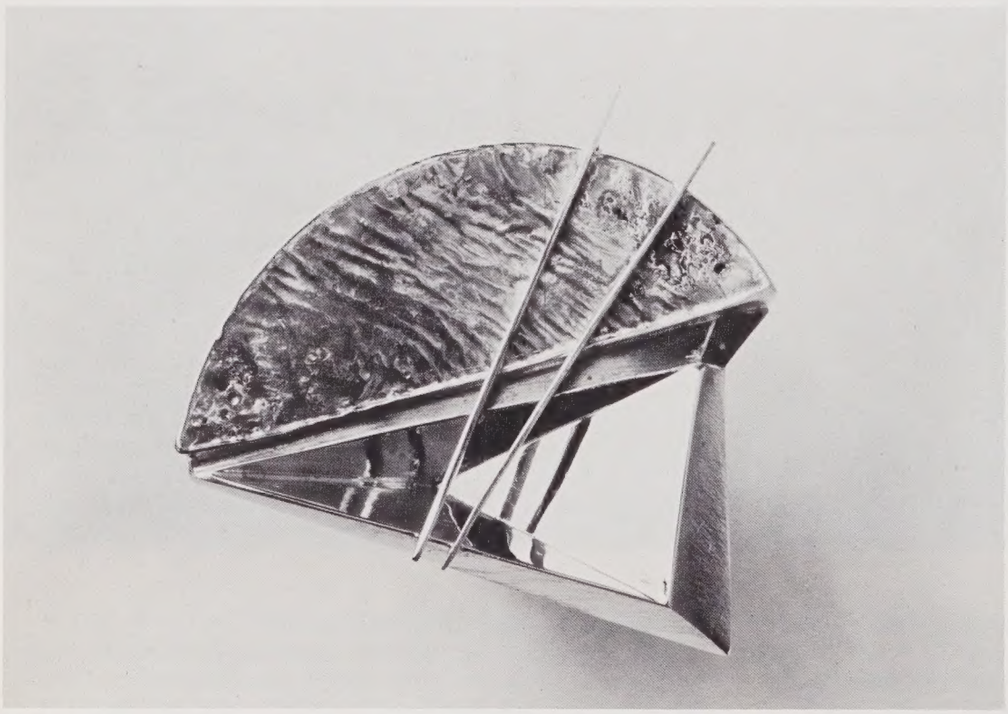
Wanting to examine its qualities further, I pursued the idea of texturing it through reticulation. While I knew that some sort of textured results were possible on alloys of a higher gold ratio than I had been using, I assumed that it might not be possible to reticulate a 95/4.75 copper/gold alloy due to the predominance of copper. However, I was successful, so I also tried the technique on another Japanese alloy, shibuichi. There are particular problems in reticulating both shakudo and shibuichi, but consistent results can be achieved once all the variables are known. Additionally, these metals can be chemically or heat colored later on a completed piece.

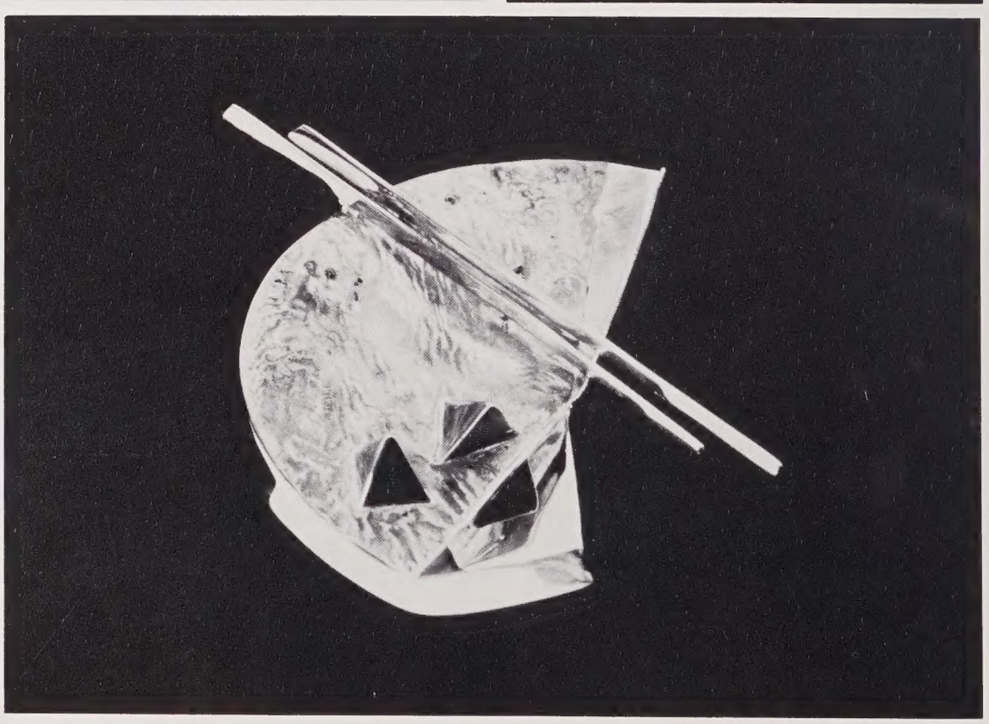
Alloys tested

Shakudo 1: 95% copper, 4.75% fine gold, melting point approximately 1080°C.

Shibuichi 1: 60% copper, 40% fine silver, melting point approximately 920°C.

Shibuichi 2: 67% copper, 32% fine silver, .5% fine gold, melting point approximately 945°C.





Torch

I found that an oxyacetylene microtorch fitted with a #4 tip worked best on 24-gauge sheet.

Due to the high ratio of copper in these alloys, particularly the shakudo, the rate of thermal conductivity is very high. A very hot, yet small-diameter flame is needed. Through additional testing I found the #4 tip produced a much more satisfactory texture than a #5 tip on the shakudo, and with both the shakudo and shibuichi it was easier to control. The #3 tip was too small.

The problem of using a propane/compressed-air torch on shakudo is that in order to achieve a flame sharp and hot enough to reticulate the metal, the diameter tends to be too large, thus heating too large an area at one time. A smaller flame does not allow the metal to reach sufficient temperature. On both metals, the microtorch produced better results and was easier to use.

Procedure: Reticulation of Shakudo 1

Successful reticulation requires that the surface skin have a higher melting point than the core. This is done through repeated annealing and pickling, thus depleting copper from the surface and raising the melting point of the surface. The controlled heating of the metal below this skin produces the reticulated texture.

I find it helpful to understand why it is possible to reticulate these metals. Alloys of a gold(Au)/copper(Cu) or a silver(Ag)/copper(Cu) composition have a point where, when heated, the metal is in neither an all-solid state nor an all-homogeneous liquid state. That temperature range may be as little as 5°C in some alloys, but it is in within this temperature range that the reticulation occurs.

Before the metal is heated to its eutectic temperature (its lowest melting point), it is in a one-solid state or phase for a Au/Cu alloy and a two-solids state or phases for a Ag/Cu alloy. When heated above its eutectic temperature it changes to a one-liquid/one-solid state before melting to a homogeneous liquid, where its melting point is determined. Reticulation takes place when the alloy is in the state where both liquid and solid are present, one-metal phase in the alloy melting just prior to the other. The texturing is accomplished by using the torch to move the liquid and solid phases in such a manner as to line up the solid phase. Thus the direction of the torch movement determines the pattern of the reticule.

The two accompanying charts illustrate the temperatures different binary alloys, either a Au/Cu alloy or a Ag/Cu alloy, reach at their liquid and solid(s) state. They also illustrate the range of possible alloys at which reticulation can occur.

The reticulation of shakudo in the process I describe occurs on the back or unheated side, not the heated side, as is the case for a 82/18 silver/copper alloy, often referred to as reticulation silver. The reticulated surface is also much more subtle. A clear explanation of the principles and process of a 82/18 silver/copper alloy can be found in *Jewelry Concepts and Technology* by Oppi Untracht (reviewed in *Metalsmith* Spring 83, volume three, number two, p. 53).

Begin with a sheet approximately the size you need to work in your design. Little is lost on the edges, and their texture can be utilized. The high rate of heat conduction restricts the size of the sheet.

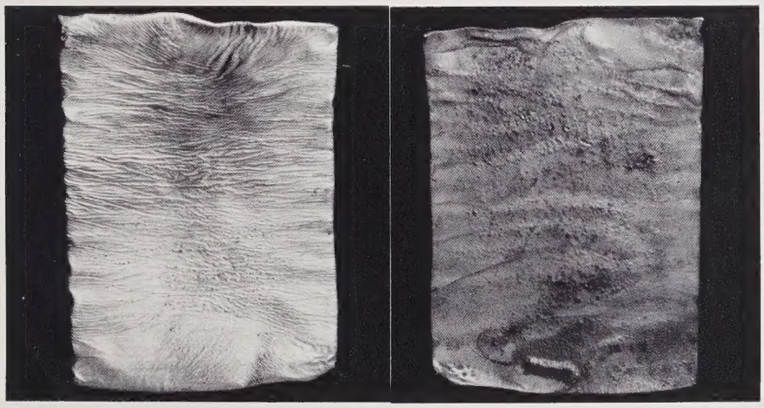
Thoroughly clean the heating block to be worked on with hot water. I prefer using a honeycomb ceramic soldering block. Do not put any flux on the metal as this will completely inhibit the reticulation process. Since the side to be textured is face down, no residual flux should be left on the soldering block.

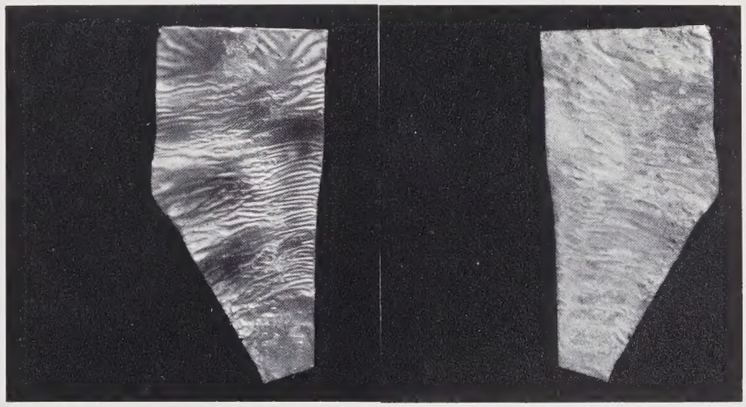
Anneal and pickle the sheet eight times. After each pickling, rub down the metal surface with steel wool to lightly burnish and clean it. It is not necessary to pickle a long time, minutes will suffice. The shakudo will remain a copper color through the annealing phase. When this procedure is completed, bend the metal slightly to prevent the surface from touching the soldering block. This will ensure that any flux left on the block will not get on the metal. The metal can be flattened later with a mallet.

To begin the reticulation process, heat the metal in one area to just below the melting point, using the oxyacetylene microtorch fitted with a #4 tip. The size of the flame should be fairly large and slightly oxidizing. If you start from one corner it is not necessary to preheat the metal. From the area just heated, slowly move the torch in small sweeping strokes, but not so slowly that the area melts. The actual working temperature range is very small. The heated area should have a glowing sheen and the metal should look as if it is being pushed forward. The texture on the heated side will look similar to that of welded metal. To check how the reticulation is going, periodically examine the unheated side. The pattern of the torch's movement will determine the pattern of the reticule. However, be careful not to overheat the metal as this will perforate the extremely thin skin of the reticulated side.

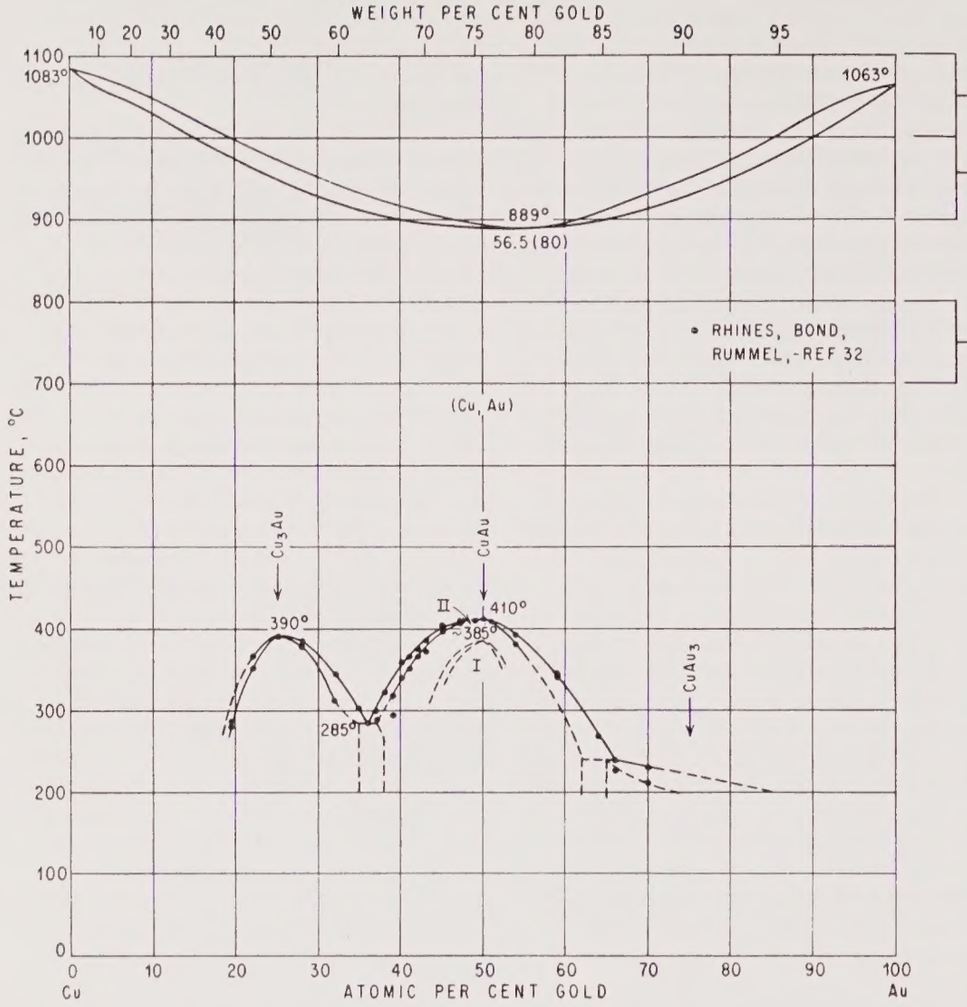
The goal is to achieve reticulation on the first attempt. However, it is possible to increase the texture with a second or third repetition of the heating cycle. I have heated metal up to three times, burnishing the piece between rounds with steel wool. Three rounds seems to be the limit, since the surface thickness becomes so variable; after that it is easy to overheat and put holes in the sheet. The final texture of the heated side will be very rough and the backside a smooth reticule. Do not pickle it excessively, as this will also damage the reticulated surface. When the reticulation is completed, the metal can be used in the same way as other sheet. And while it is more brittle after reticulation, it can be formed somewhat.

There is no more difficulty soldering this metal than pure copper, quick oxidation being the only problem. Both silver or gold solder can be used. Avoid getting solder on the textured surface.





Opposite page, clockwise from top left: *Sushi I Pin,* reticulated shakudo, 14k gold, sterling silver back, 1984; *Walking Pin,* reticulated shibuichi, 18k gold, shakudo, sterling silver back, 1984; *Shibuichi Pin I,* reticulated shibuichi, 14k gold, sterling silver, 1984; *Sushi II Pin,* reticulated shakudo, 18k gold, sterling silver back, 1984. **Above left:** reticulated shibuichi piece, front and back; **Above:** reticulated shakudo piece, front and back. All photos: Robert Gere

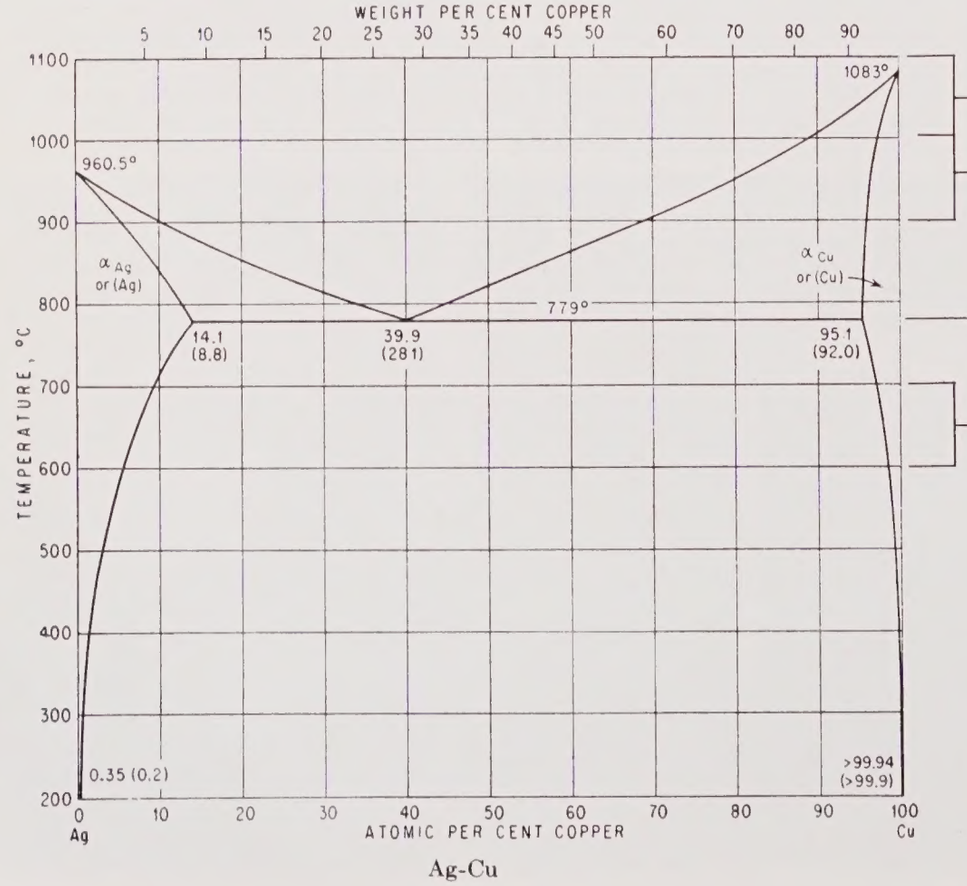


Au-Cu

homogeneous liquid state

1 liquid/1 solid or 2 liquid state, area for reticulation to occur

1 liquid state



Ag-Cu

homogeneous liquid state

1 liquid/1 solid state, area for reticulation to occur

eutectic point

2 solids state

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Reticulation of Shibuichi 1 and 2

As with the shakudo, here reticulation occurs on the back, or unheated side of the sheet. The texture achieved is very fine and quite complex. The size of the sheet is not as critical as with the shakudo since this alloy has a lower rate of thermal conductivity, thus making it easier to heat. Again, the heating block must be free of any flux. Likewise, flux should not be used on the metal.

While it is possible to reticulate shibuichi with a propane/compressed air torch, the oxyacetylene microtorch produces a superior texture and is easier to use.

Anneal and pickle the sheet six times, rubbing it down with steel wool between pickling in order to lightly burnish and clean off the residual copper. The depletion of the copper from the surface will leave the metal a fine silver white.

With a #4 tip on the microtorch, adjust the ratio of acetylene to oxygen to produce a large reduction flame with which to preheat the sheet. Heat the metal evenly to just below the annealing temperature. Then readjust the flame to a moderate size, slightly oxidizing. The size of the flame should be in proportion to the size of the sheet. It is much easier to overheat the shibuichi than the shakudo, which can then blister the reticulated side.

Starting at one end, heat a small area of metal until it reaches just below the melting point. It will start to glow, attaining a surface sheen. Slowly move the torch. The surface of the heated side will blister slightly as the flame is moved, however, the blistering should be kept to a minimum. Flame size and rate of movement is critical. If the flame is too large or moved too slowly, the backside can be easily damaged. If the flame is too small or moved too quickly, little will happen or a very small reticule will be produced. It is necessary to periodically look at the backside to check its appearance. The final texture of the heated side should be blistered and pocked. The texture of the unheated side should be finely reticulated.

The entire process of reticulating shibuichi can be done on top of a metal-top hot plate set at 500°C. This keeps the metal from dropping below a minimum temperature at all times, reducing the time it takes to reach the eutectic point.

Unlike the shakudo very little texturing can be added to the shibuichi with additional rounds of the heating cycle.

The difference in texture between shibuichi 1 and shibuichi 2 is very slight—the 60/40 alloy producing a bit larger reticule. The 67/32/.5 alloy tended to blister more on the backside if overheated.

There are difficulties in soldering shibuichi. If possible, always solder from the unreticulated side, as it is easy to destroy the textured surface if it is overheated. Gold soldering proved to be extremely difficult, though I had no problems using silver solder. Shibuichi does oxidize more quickly than sterling silver.

The reticulation causes the shibuichi to be brittle, but light forming is possible.

Heat Coloration of Unreticulated Shakudo

The colors that are possible to achieve on an unreticulated shakudo piece are a range of blues and purples with magenta and yellow at opposite ends, and black from successive heatings. The colors are fairly stable unless the piece is excessively handled. They do darken a little with time, though I have found little change in pieces that I have kept for two years.

Once the piece is soldered, filed and sanded to the desired finish, the coloring is ready to begin. A highly polished surface will show the colors off least well. Coloration is the last step, aside from setting stones.

The flame size is contingent on the size of the area to be colored. Too small a flame is preferable to one too large in controlling the spectrum as much as possible. Using a #4 tip on the microtorch, adjust the oxygen-acetylene ratio to produce a slightly oxidizing flame. Both a highly oxidizing flame and a reducing flame will produce scorch marks, so avoid heating too quickly or too broad an area. Also do not use any flux. The metal is only heated enough to change the color.

The piece should be clean and free of grease. Heat the shakudo portion only, starting from one end and brushing the flame up the metal. Let the color rise as the metal cools. Repeat this procedure about three times. An attractive range of colors can be achieved on the first round but is difficult to reproduce on successive pieces. Therefore if matched color is needed, heat once and pickle briefly. It is important that the pickle solution be hot. The temperature of the pickle solution directly affects the final color and a cold solution does not work as well. Rinse and dry completely for the second heating.

Again using a small flame, heat the shakudo from one end to the other, lightly brushing the metal with the flame. Let the color rise through each pass. The color spectrum passes from red to purple to blue, then starts to whiteout to a pale yellow.

A second pickling and third heating will produce a blackish blue.

Should you not like the color range, or if it is overheated or spotty, pickle, sand clean, wash and start again.

Heat Coloration of Reticulated Shakudo

Due to the undulating surface of reticulated shakudo a more iridescent color can be achieved. It is more difficult to color the reticulated shakudo and it is easier to overheat the piece, which results in little color being produced.

Lightly buff with a stitched muslin buff to polish and clean the surface. Wash off all remaining grease.

With a small flame on the microtorch, lightly brush the surface with the flame. Let the color rise between passes. The full range of colors can be achieved through patient heating and cooling.

Heat Coloration of Reticulated Shibuichi

This metal is much more difficult to color than shakudo yet the iridescent colors achieved are very dramatic. The main obstacle is removal of the fine silver surface left after successive heating and pickling. This silver layer must be removed if a range of colors is to be achieved. Again the heat coloring is the last step, aside from setting stones.

To remove the fine silver surface, I use a felt knife buff on the flex shaft. Then on a large buffing machine I finish with a stitched muslin buff. The silver surface is a very thin skin and removes easily without disturbing the crispness of the texture. The remaining metal should be a pale bronze, pinkish in color. When the shibuichi is uniform in color and all grease washed off, the piece is ready for heating.

With lightly sweeping strokes, brush the metal with a small flame on the microtorch. This flame should be slightly on the reducing side. The color will appear quickly with little heating. Overheating will produce a grayish white oxidation that must then be removed to start again. Colors possible to produce include an iridescent, similar to an oil slick, and a range of reds and blues with an overall yellow tarnish.

Each reticulated alloy will produce its own unique texture, whether it is the ones I have described or the traditional alloys.

The alloys themselves can be purchased through Wal-Glo Metals, Inc., 20 Passaic St., Garfield, NJ 07026; telephone (201) 773-1983. John Timmer of Wal-Glo is familiar with their production and will make up a new alloy following your formula.

I am grateful to Dr. John Collier and Victor Surprenant of the Thayer School of Engineering at Dartmouth College for their assistance in the explanation and illustration of the principles of this process. ■

Diane Egbert, a distinguished member of the Society of North American Goldsmiths, has been a practicing goldsmith since 1973. For the past seven years she has coowned a custom goldsmithing studio called Electrum in Hanover, NH. This fall she will relocate to Albuquerque, NM.

ELECTRIC PLUGS WITH FORKS

LOUISE NORRELL

by Janet Koplos

It's hard to think of a comparison. While I can haphazardly categorize today's nonjewelry metalsmithing as either traditional holloware or sculpture, Louise Norrell's work doesn't really fit in either one. While I can divide approaches to surface into the perfection camp, the machine camp and the raw materials camp, Louise Norrell's work isn't any of those. Some metalwork focuses on shape, some on surface. Louise Norrell's focuses on narrative imagery.

These are pseudo-traditional metal objects. One is a flask, others are boxes; there are a couple of spoons, some cups and diminutive vases. Yet in discussing the works, we can set aside these seemingly defining descriptions, returning to them only near the end of the discussion, as an added dimension to Norrell's work. For it is the pictorial image more than form, more than material, more than surface, more than use, that motivates and animates these artworks as a distinctive and unusual expression.

Norrell has always drawn. She took high school art classes and her artwork at the University of Georgia started in drawing and painting. But she always liked working small—shy and self-conscious, she worked small so that nobody could see what she was doing while she was working on it—so she responded readily to the intimacy of jewelry scale and was soon engrossed in Gary Noffke's metals classes.

She found her present style during her second year of graduate school at Virginia Commonwealth University. She combined the drawing and the enameling she had used as an undergraduate, with jewelry scale, resulting in pins decorated with colored scenes. She started by laying transparent enamel over texture, but she wasn't happy with the way the enamel flattened the surface. She tried limiting the areas of color and eventually began to use various metals for color effect, such as gold, bronze and (most often) copper on silver, contrasted with dark, oxidized areas. She made the shift into holloware to give herself a slightly larger scale than the jewelry permitted. She continues to raise and chase to achieve shape and texture.

Norrell is now in her third subject matter series. The first was farm animals, the second focused on eating and drinking, and the present series has to do with social commitment, with specific images inspired by items in the newspaper. All the pieces share an interest in texture, a basically representational approach without much attention to detail or precision, an unconcern with orderly relationships (e.g., the conventional stabilizing effect of gravity), stacking of representations and distention of space, a compulsion to fill up every available space and a subtle, quirky sense of humor.

Consider a few examples. Both the *Cow Cup* and the *Cow Fertility Cup* are deeply textured with copper planished into the silver surface after soldering. Both depict cows in various positions, rightside up and upside down and often splayed, with dotted lines of butchering diagrams. The cups are crisscrossed with the textured images of roads and rocks and grass and even piles of—what! udders? Norrell laughs, shrugs and says they're just another pattern.

The *Meat Box* is a transition into the eating and drinking theme. The cows appear again, but this time they have been processed into sides of beef, with ghostly ribcage patterns, and they float through a kitchen along with a plucked fryer, an open carton of eggs and a rabbit-eared television set. The *Dining Table Box* seems to lead into new territory. The subject table has splayed legs and a potato-shaped top. On the reverse of the

& OTHER AMBIGUOUS VISIONS

box, floating upside down, are two large nude figures engaged in animated conversation. They bob above an armchair; a fish swims beside them, a duck walks on the floor below them. What does it mean?

It at least means that Norrell's cryptic subject matter is evolving again. The use of televisions seems symbolic; in *Dogs and TV* the strange, disorderly dogs (some with udders, some with pig snouts) cavort before television sets which show nude women, fish or jagged lines—pretty rudimentary content. *Evolution* is populated by creatures with fish bodies but arms and legs, who jive through today's toxic primeval ooze carrying enormous "ghetto blasters," high-stepping over cigarette butts and past cars on blocks with shot-out windows. It's a lethal vision. And speaking of lethal, a new piece, in progress, shows an operating room with probes and scissors and fish, and a man on the operating table with a visible digestive tract, a lady with a visible reproductive tract and a doctor with bare feet and a mask that covers his whole face. It is not designed to inspire trust in the medical profession.

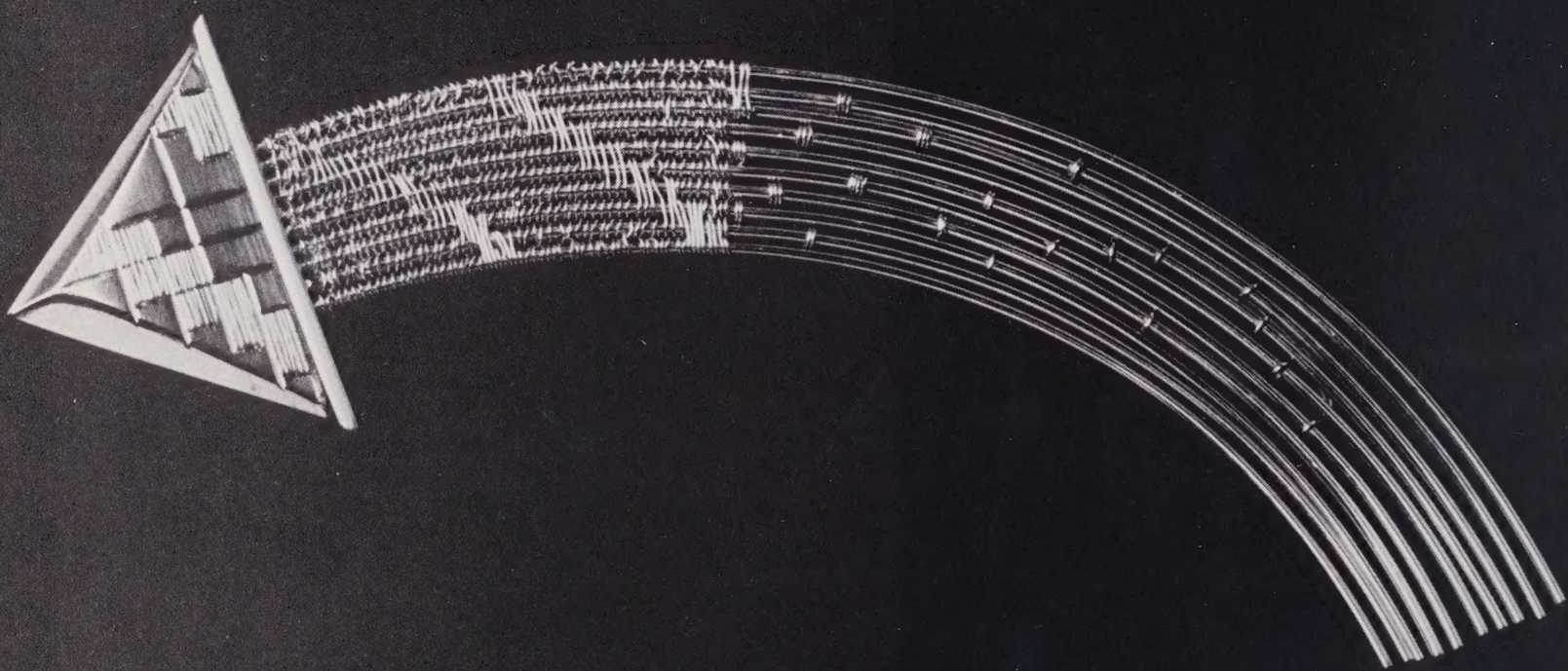
These are dream snatches, fragmentary images and surrealistic pairings, such as an electric plug with a fork on the end (why not, Norrell asks; we have electric toothbrushes). Above all they are disorderly, bereft of spatial specificity. Norrell thinks of the images as just oozing out or growing in an organic way. There are centers of interest but no formal organization and no structuring plan. She wants them to be ambiguous because she denies having "any specific set of answers" anyway. The images are not meant to be moralizing, but they are meant to be questioning or commenting on life.

And it's here that we return to the issue of function, for Norrell prefers that her works be usable. She has used her cow and goose spoons, and there is no reason that the boxes and flasks would not function. She is more comfortable with the offhandedness, the low regard that people give to functional objects. The functional form of the pieces, the fact that they are curving flasks and cylindrical cups, also amplifies the spatial confusion of her work. There is no starting place, little sense of front or back, just a spatial and contextual continuum that one must push into and try to make sense of—just like life. Metal techniques also make a specific contribution to the character of her work. The process of forming distorts and individualizes the already loosely structured scenes and deforms the images further. That's fine with Norrell. She likes the paradox of precise metals techniques resulting in a primitive, chaotic image.

There is a consistency to Norrell's work and a coherence to her ideas that indicates that the provocative complexity of these objects is not a lucky accident. She is a young woman, only a few years out of graduate school, working in relative isolation in a small town near Athens, Georgia, fitting her own work into the evenings and weekends after her day work at an Athens jewelry shop. It's not an easy situation for making art. But Norrell seems to be onto something; she has a distinctive style that opens up exciting avenues of expression for the metalsmith, and she's leading the way with these unorthodox, messy, disorienting, agitating, but ultimately rewarding objects. ■

Opposite page, left: *Cow Cup*, copper, silver, 14k gold, nickel plating, 3¾ × 1¾"; **right:** *Evolution*, copper, silver, brass, bronze, 3½ × 2½ × ½". **Above left:** *Meat Box*, copper, silver, brass, bronze, 2½ × 1½"; **right:** *The Doctor's Shot Glass*, silver, copper, brass, bronze, 2½ × 1½". **Above:** Detail. Photos: Susan Snyder

Janet Koplos writes frequently for Metalsmith, American Ceramics, Art Papers *and is a contributing editor to* Fiberarts.



FEEDBACK:
JUDGING THE 1984 JM/SNAG PLATINUM JEWELRY DESIGN COMPETITION

by Ettagale Blauer

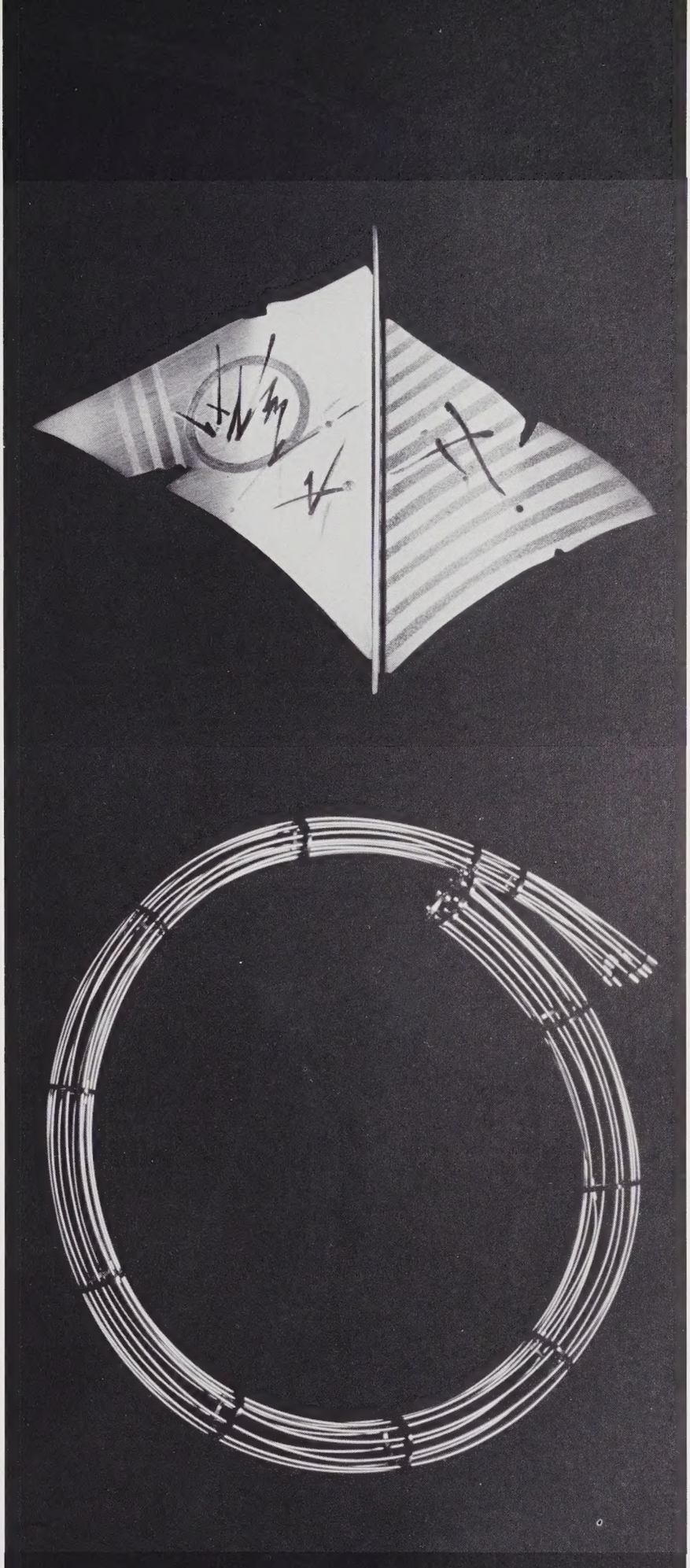
For a jewelry design editor such as myself, judging a competition such as the second annual "SNAG Platinum Jewelry Design Competition" sponsored by Johnson Matthey was, in many ways, an extension of the daily quest for good design. It differed from that work, however, in that the decisions made represented consensus, a group vote that took into account the ideas and opinions of three people, in this case, Whitney Boin, Deborah Aguado and myself.

If our jury was any example, judges are very serious about the task they are asked to perform. This competition required judging in two phases. On the first day, we considered all the sketches that were submitted for the competition. Judging from sketches has its own built-in dilemmas. How much weight should be given to an excellent sketch over one that is not as well drawn but which shows interesting design thinking? Not every metalsmith is adept at drawing on paper. Since this, like almost all such events, was a blind judging, we could not guess at the ability of the designer to fulfill the sketch at hand. (In virtually all competitions, names of the designers are concealed from the judges.)

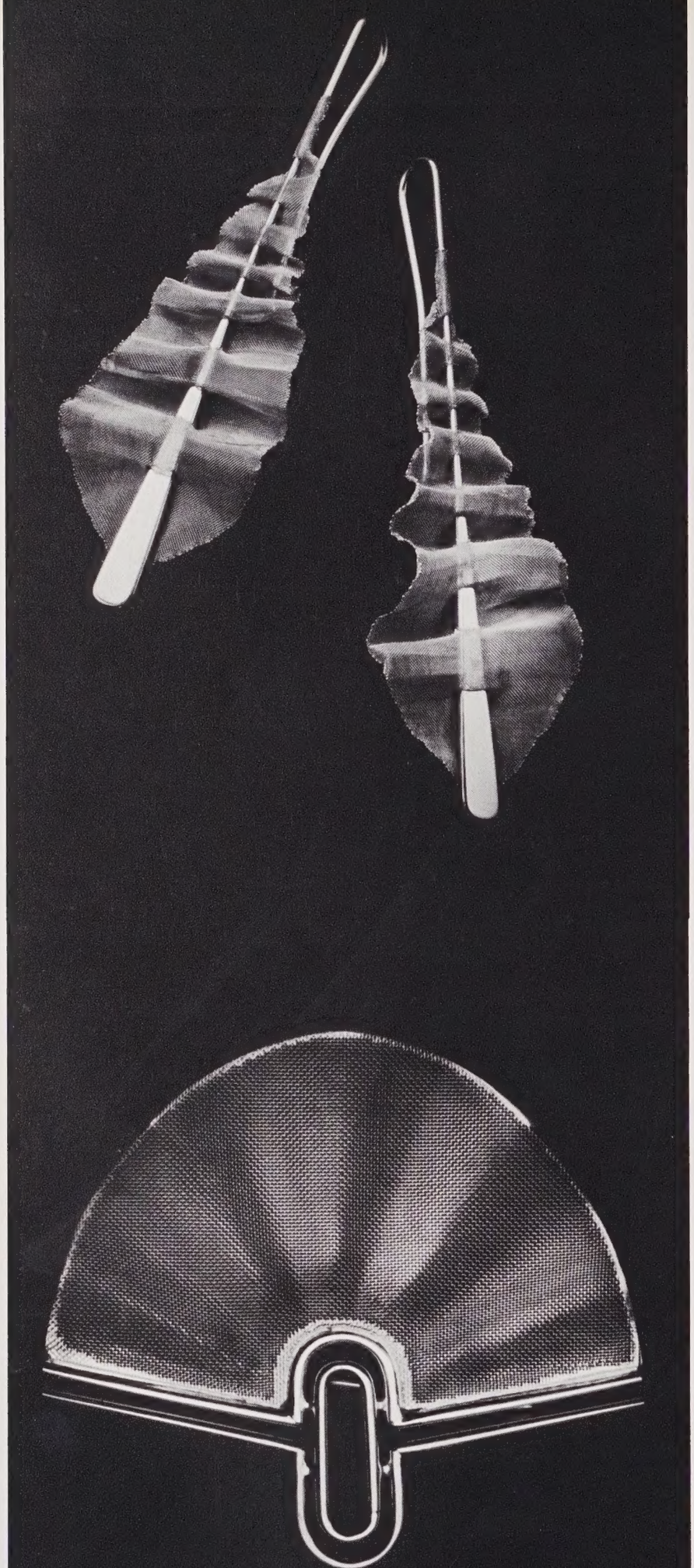
The sketches were judged according to their intent. Based on the sketch, would this be an interesting piece of jewelry that takes advantage of platinum's unique qualities? Could the design be made within the constraints of the competition's rules (using no more than ten dwt. of platinum)? Would it really be possible to execute the design based on the physical techniques required to work platinum? Were such techniques within the grasp of individual metalsmith or would they require a commercial workshop?

Some of the technical questions quickly eliminated certain of the designs. While I was not technically able to make such judgments, both Deborah and Whitney were, and they helped me with those considerations.

And finally, were the ideas original? In several cases, we recognized the designer by the familiarity of the design idea. All three of us see a great deal of jewelry and it is unlikely that at least one of us would not have known if something had already been offered by the designer, though in another material. We narrowed down our choices and finally settled on 10 sketches.



Opposite page: Grand Prize Winner Norman Cherry, Kelso, Scotland, *Rainbow with Arrow Pin.* **Above:** Runners-up Lynda Watson-Abbott, Santa Cruz, CA, *Brooch* and **right:** Susan Hamlet, Stillwater, WI, *Flexible Column Bracelet*



When the finished pieces came in, we began the process anew, this time looking for those pieces that most perfectly fulfilled the promise made in the sketches; those that took advantage of platinum's qualities and that also offered a personal design vision.

Every piece was judged individually by each of us and then we thrashed it out together. Certain pieces clearly failed to meet the promise of the sketches. Where the sketch indicated roundness, the piece was flat. Where the sketch suggested texture, the piece was smooth. A significant problem with some of the finished pieces was their lack of wearability. Earrings in particular suffered in this aspect; we tried them on and recruited Johnson Matthey personnel to try them on too. One pair had posts that were too thick to go through the ear lobes of all but one of us. The same pair, once on the ear, pitched forward because the weight was excessive and the earrings were not balanced.

Another pair offered color in the sketch, based on the use of titanium elements. The finished pair, however, were fashioned in such a way that the titanium could not be seen when the earrings were worn, so the pair had very little excitement.

Several pieces seemed unfinished. The edges were rough, and the design that looked multilevel in the sketch turned out to be one-dimensional in execution. One neckpiece which had a very pleasing method of attaching the handmade chain to the pendant stood out stiffly from the body when it was tried on.

Another pair of earrings faced the wrong direction when worn; there was no way to wear them to get the effect of the design. The sketch promised roundness; the actual pair were not finished all the way around so that the backs were very unattractive. The French wires curved in such an awkward fashion that the earrings could not assume a good position on the ear.

The three pieces that were awarded prizes each offered something special. Norman Cherry's grand prize winning pin totally fulfilled the sketch. Although just a simple arc/arrowhead design, it was richly textured with exciting surfaces. The actual pin mechanism was smoothly executed and springy. The long arced elements took advantage of platinum's unique tensile strength.

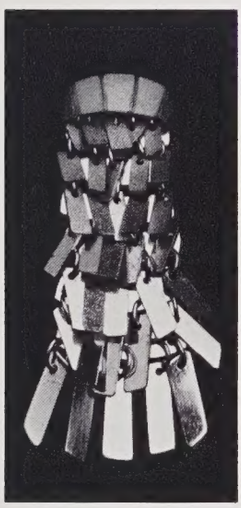
Susan Hamlet's flexible-column bracelet yielded even more than the sketch promised. The platinum connectors, or cards, had such a sparkle we looked twice to see if there were any diamonds set in (there weren't). The unique closing device was original and well thought out.

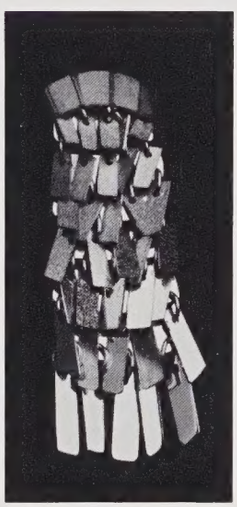
Above: Debra Stark, Verona, NJ, *Ripple with Spine Earrings*. **Left:** Alf Ward, Somerset Center, MI, *Fan Brooch*

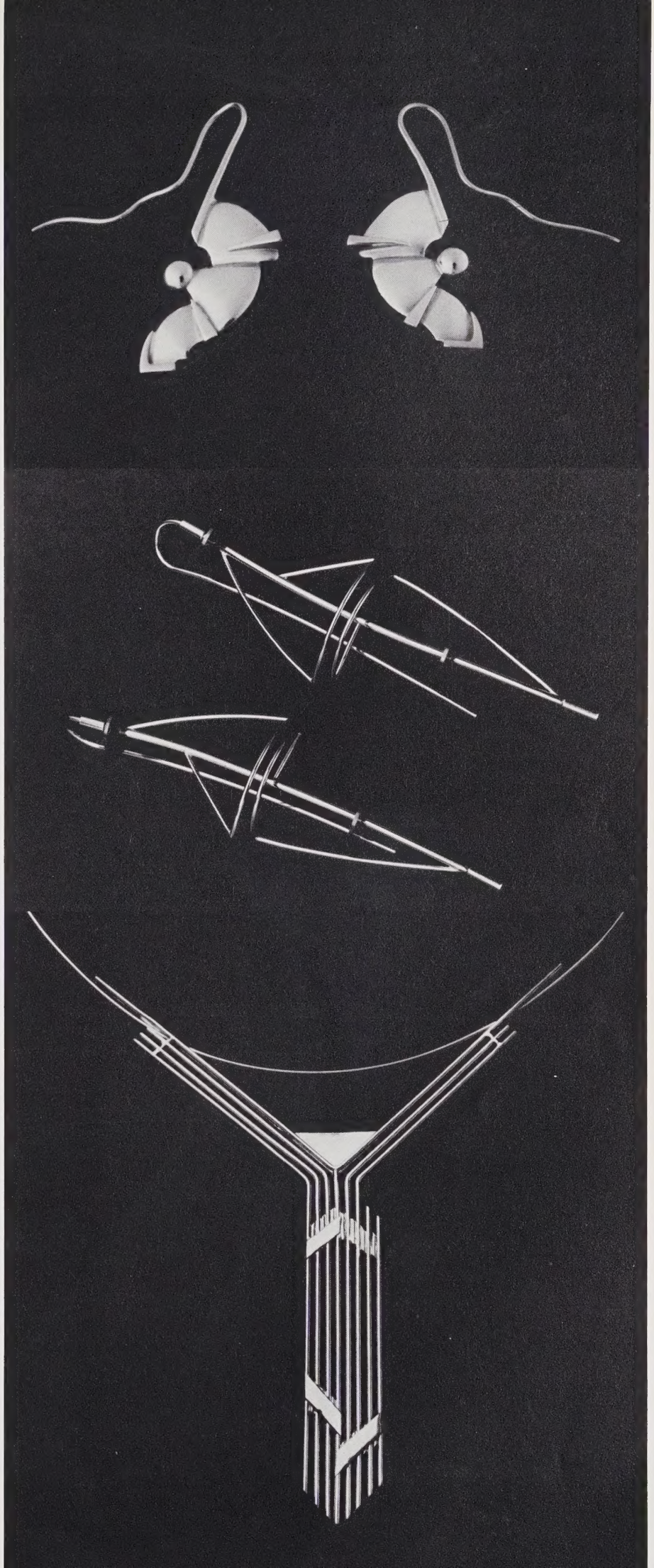
Lynda Watson Abbott's platinum and 18k yellow gold brooch was executed to perfection; all surfaces were beautifully finished, both front and back. Every detail promised in the sketch was flawlessly presented in the finished piece. This is a fine piece that shows a very wide grasp of technique and a lively design mind at work.

It's vital for designers to bear in mind the special qualities of the material they are working with, especially if it's one with which they have little experience. Design competitions have sponsors for a simple reason: to promote and increase the use of the material. There must be a special reason for using the particular material, in this case platinum, rather than the more usual gold. The color, the texture, the very workability of the metal must be taken into consideration as the design thinking proceeds. The designer should have a working knowledge of the weight of the material; that was one of the major problems with this group of designs.'

The "SNAG Platinum Jewelry Design Competition" entrants were judged by three people intimately involved with jewelry. This is not always the case. The results of any judging can only be as good as the entrants plus the capabilities of the judges. We were, perhaps, tougher than nonindustry judges might have been, but we were also more knowledgeable and rather unlikely to let something weak slip in. I think in our judging we fulfilled the purpose of the competition—to seek out and advance good design in platinum. ■







Above: Glenda Arentzen, Suncook, NH, *Waterfall Earrings.* **Right top:** Heather Williams, Philadelphia, PA, *Pea Pod Earrings;* **center:** Tom Muir, Bloomington, IN, *Earrings;* **bottom:** George McLean, Mill Valley, CA, *Necklace*

Belle and Roger Kuhn: New Works
Plum Gallery, Kensington, Maryland
April 8–28, 1984
by Komelia Hongja Okim

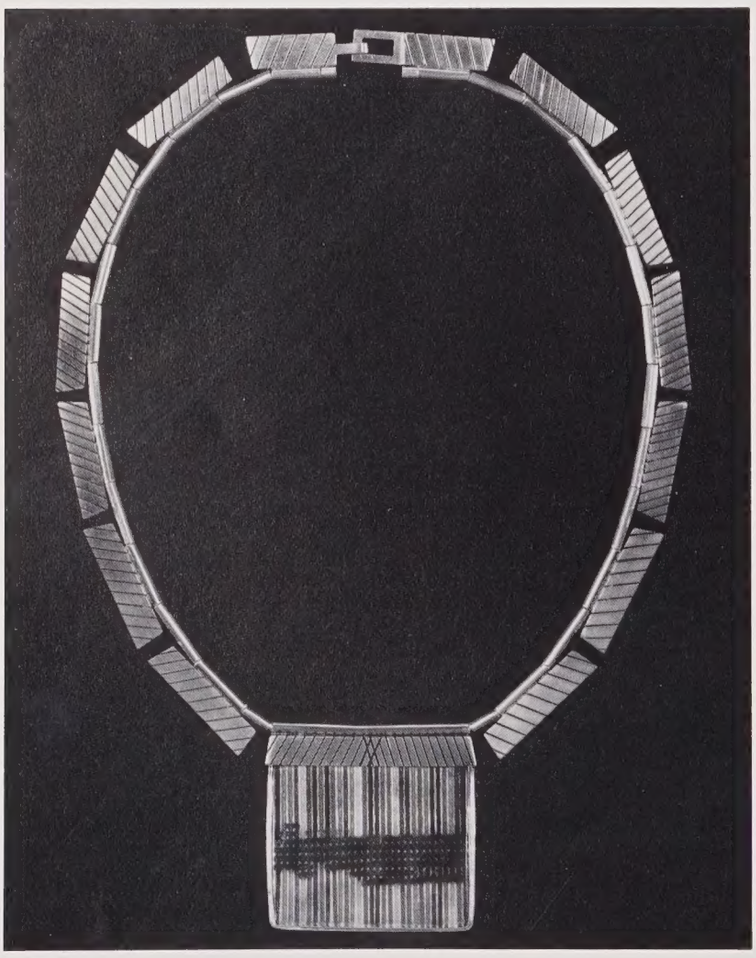
Belle and Roger Kuhn have worked as a team since 1969, Belle striving for expertise in enameling and Roger in metal. The Kuhns have traveled extensively to see, feel and experience visual stimulation. However, they seldom intellectualize their thoughts or feelings but freely react and comment about the things they see.

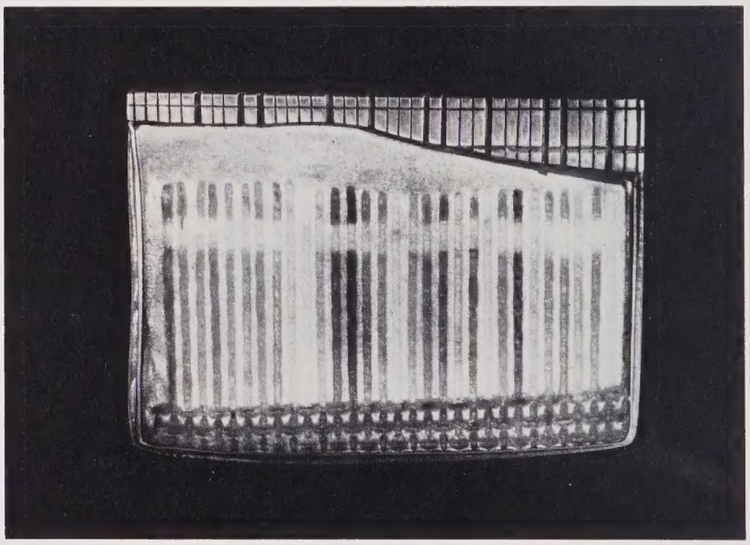
This past spring the Kuhns exhibited 40 new works, consisting of brooches, neckpieces, pendants, lapel and bar pins, which reflected their trip to Japan in 1983 and their interests in Indonesian, African and Western Pacific masks, textiles and statuary. The luminous, delicate color transparencies of the enamels and subtle shapes and surface treatment of the metal frameworks conveyed the impression of Japanese rice-paper sliding doors, windows, folding screens, "tori" gates, roofs—as evident in *Neckpiece '83*—interior structures, architectural facades and subtle textures and colors of ethnic textiles. The unconscious experiences were transformed into colors and compositions in such delicate ways that one was struck by both their simplicity and their complexity.

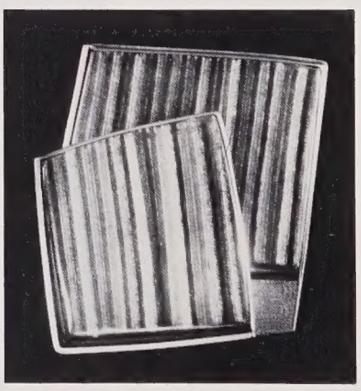
After several years of experimentation in different ways of doing cloisonné, Belle came to this new way, using four to five layers of transparent enamels over embossed fine silver foils. These embossed foils are stripes and linear grooves in fine relief, created by roller printing the foil with fine steel mesh screens. In order to create mainly one-directional linear lines, the weft grids are ground off by cutting discs on a flexible shaft. As a result, these warp grids allow vertical and horizontal color compositions. The color sequences are not static but constantly change in a play of light and dark values the intensities of opposite colors; transparencies, lusters and delineated spaces are influenced by reflections of light at various angles on the embossed relief. The occasional use of opaque colors on the border or framework allow the transparent colors to appear more luminous, tactile and dimensional. These linear abstractions are carried onto the metal framework by Roger. The shapes and surface treatments are carefully planned and echoed to enhance the enamels and are an additional but complementary focal point to the overall work.

A cursory glance caught the consistency of expression in the collected works on exhibit, but a closer study revealed subtle changes in mood and elements of style. The metalwork in the first case clearly suggested elements of oriental architecture which enhanced and were enhanced in turn by the enamel color sequences. The second case in contrast had the feeling of integrating Eastern and Western influences, pieces reminiscent of the oriental architecture but modified by Western style of steel structures. The contrast of horizontal and vertical grid patterns and the juxtaposition of positive and negative forms created more dynamic content. The third case had pieces that evoked images of subtly rippling water, with color being dilineated over space. Others suggested the subtleties of strata definition in rock formations common to the Western landscape. The wall case was dominated by bar and lapel pins that gave the feeling of segments translated from woven tapestries strongly ethnic in character.

The total impression of the show was that of such a harmonious integration of metal and enamel that the collaboration did not seem labored. ■







Belle and Roger Kuhn—**far left:** Neckpiece, 5½×7″; **above:** *Brooch*, 2×1½″; **left:** *Brooch*, 1½×1¾″, all enamel on embossed fine silver and sterling silver, 1983. Photos: Breger & Assoc. **Opposite page:** Michael Tom, *5 sisters: The Windrunner*, copper, 17×7×7″

Metals Invitational Exhibition
Southwest Texas State University
February 15–March 8, 1984
by Tom Williams

The Southwest Texas State University Metals Invitational was conceived about a year ago by Munya Avigail Upin, metals instructor in the Art Department there. Her intention was to present a variety of work by artists ranging from traditional metalsmiths to those working with space-age materials.

An example of the latter is Vernon Reed, a self-trained artist, who is fascinated by the artistic potential of computer technology. Reed employs miniature electronic components in his exquisitely crafted objects. On the other hand, David Freda's *Modern Biology* was much more sculpturally realistic and illusionistic. A small green snake made of plastic and metal slithers between the pages of a science textbook of the same title. Freda's clever piece evoked surreal humor and Art Nouveau decadence while simultaneously managing to harmonize the divergent worlds of science and art in a poignant object of exotic charm.

Wearables were represented by Jane Groover, Martha Glowacki, Mary Lee Hu, Randy Long and David Tisdale. Groover prefers to work in silver and gold, traditional metals for personal adornment. Stylistically, some of her work seems rooted in the Constructivist preoccupation with shapes and their planar relationships. Her *Ginko Leaf* series hinted at Japanese origin, but the work offered little by way of innovation, either in form or technique. Mary Lee Hu included two neckpieces; one of them, *Choker #62* was a less sculptural, more appropriate piece of wearing apparel. However, even displayed on a gallery wall, this elaborate "rope" of sterling silver was elegantly eyecatching. Randy Long's *Kimono Fragment* was clean and geometric. David Tisdale's anodized aluminum bracelet was a bold example of formal presentation but it too appeared to override itself by assuming a too-perfect, almost manufactured, look.

Simplicity was a hallmark of Doug Steakley's forged sterling silver cheese knives; however, these delightfully functional implements projected such a modern, economic character—dramatically catching and reflecting the least amount of light—that their matter-of-fact objectivity was at once disarming and appealing.

David Keens offered a couple of very funky chairs, highly vocal metaphors of chaos and disintegration. Their incredible garishness suggested brutality, impalement, amputation. Reminiscent of such early 20th-century Dada objects as Man Ray's spiked flat iron, Keen's chairs denied furniture's inherent usefulness. These chairs not only prohibited sitting, they fairly shrieked denial of *any* kind of rest, physical or emotional. Thelma Coles's copper and steel sculptures were also disturbing, but for different reasons. Although Coles is admittedly (and admirably) concerned with environmental issues, such works as *Frail Coexistence* and *Sheltered Growth* did not really inspire a consideration of destructive human interaction on the ecology. Her art was not so much esoteric, merely less than inspirational.

Michael Tom's beautiful copper pots were something else entirely. Suggesting Tom's Hawaiian origin, their subtle colors and textures provided a visual "moveable feast." As Upin expressed in her own response to Tom's work, "as I unwrapped the packages, the beauty of the pieces nearly brought me to tears." Tom's esthetic is of sublime proportions, reflecting a sense of the cosmic and ethereal. Paula Garrett's *Clippings from Spring* was almost as delightful—an immaculate metal construction incorporating overtones of Japanese ideograms along with cubist balancing of spatial relationships.

Mixed Metaphor was the title of a cerebral sculpture by Carol Kumata, the appropriateness of which became more obvious upon examination. A metal cruciform shape containing innocuous but intimate objects, *Metaphor* suggested a wealth of mysteries: a labyrinth, a smelter (certainly apropos for a metalsmith) or cauldron, a cache of supernatural paraphernalia. Kumata's Japanese heritage is evident in *Trapped in a Golden Triangle,* another container in which metal and stone enunciate their physical presence and thus enhance our own consciousness of form.

This show was small but handsomely mounted. Its variety was stimulating and the overall quality of the work gratifying. Also included in the show was work by Harlan Butt and Linda Threadgill. ■

Randy Long: Works in Metal
Fine Arts Gallery, Indiana University,
Bloomington, Indiana
November, 1983
by Lynda LaRoche

Randy Long began her new position as Assistant Professor of the metals department at Indiana University with a most impressive exhibition of her metalwork. I have followed Randy's work with great interest and applause for the past several years. This exhibition demonstrated Randy's ability to express her vision in wearable jewelry as well as sculptural forms for contemplation.

Geometric forms prevailed here, with a delicate balance of surface treatments created by roller printing, sandblasting and manipulating colored metals. This surface treatment helps to soften an otherwise stark environment of geometric shapes. Throughout the show there were many symbols that Randy continues to explore with her own signature. Pyramids and cones appear throughout the work, calculated to look accidental in their placement. Her concentration on a limited number of forms allows freedom in the scale and arrangement of various components within each piece. Details of solids suggest mathematical equations of time, dust particles and atoms floating in an unfamiliar landscape.

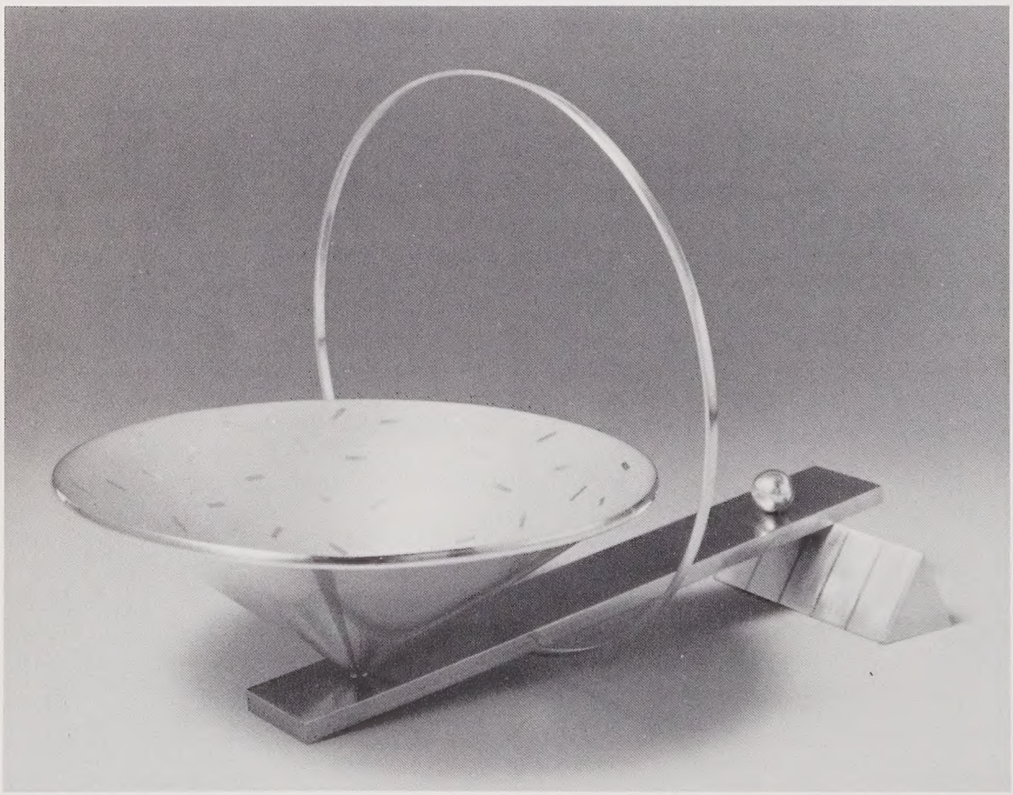
In sculptures concerned with balance and interaction, such as *Vessel for a Ring Master,* the treatment of an edge is never overlooked. Line is seen as a repeating element, from inlay to edge to a tangible line in space. Subtle touches are seen in the rim of nickel silver at the top of the cone and in the overlapped seam which creates a relief line indicating the construction. The shapes support one another leaning, piercing and interacting. The point of the cone is so sharp that the pierced disc that it penetrates is further emphasized. A circle holds everything together, as if the piece would fly apart from centrifugal force if it were not there. The infinity and perfection of the circle becomes a stabilizer in this delicate balance of images. The striped terrain softens the finite nature of the piece to indicate a fragment that continues without defining its borders. In contrast, the three brooches *Closed Segment, Open Segment,* and *Frosted Segment* are all framed by struts holding the flattened cones together while providing an edge to the work.

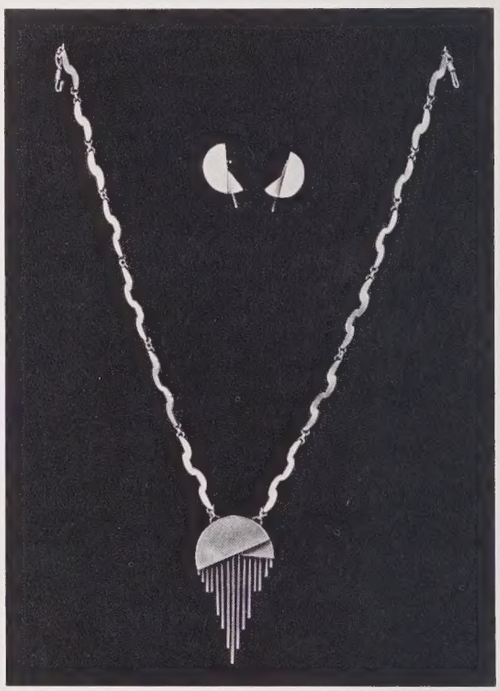
The apparent simplicity of this work is foiled by Randy's attention to detailing. She relies on pattern, texture and a change of color to give depth to the simple open and closed forms in this exhibition. The choice of materials becomes an essential element in the overall statement of each piece. Through the consistent use of sterling and nickel a sense of mystery and quietness is created. The translation of sculptural ideas into wearable jewelry works well, demonstrating an ability to freely design works for use and/or contemplation. ■

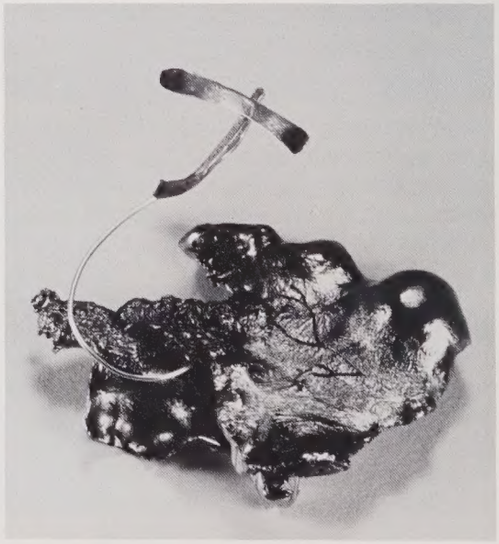
57th Annual National High School Art Exhibition
Corcoran Gallery and School of Art,
Washington, D.C.
June 2–17, 1984

For 57 years Scholastic, Inc., with the cooperation of civic-minded sponsors, has conducted an art awards program for American high-school students. Aiming to encourage student achievement in creative art, the program has started many worthy students on their way toward advanced study and careers in the art field. Jewelry is one of the 15 classifications in which honors are awarded.

Regional exhibitions of the best work from art classrooms of secondary schools are held in February. From these a national jury of distinguished artists and art educators select finalists who receive honors, including 100 tuition scholarships granted by art schools and colleges, gold medals, certificates and special awards. Outstanding work is shown at the National High School Art Exhibition. ■







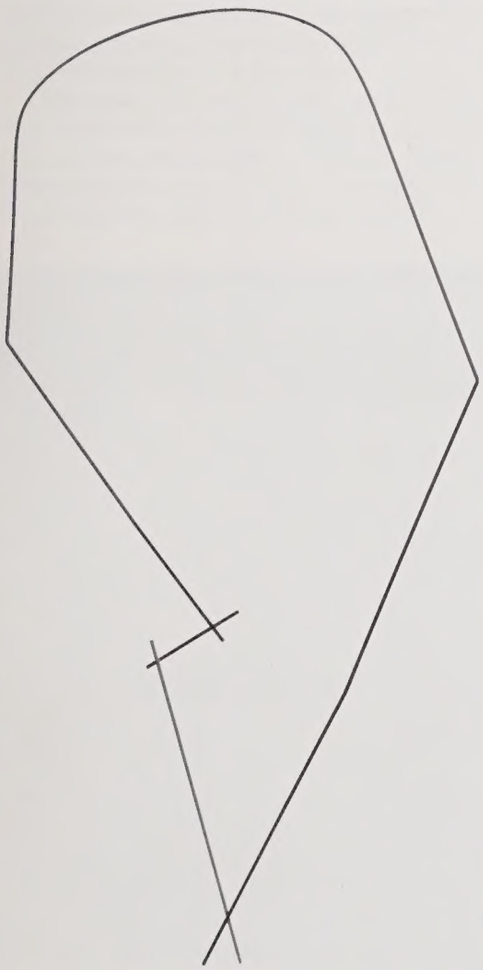
Above: Rany Long, *Vessel for a Ring Master,* sterling and nickel silver 6¼ × 5⅝ × 9¼". **Right, top:** Gail Bowman, Waterford Mott High School, Pontiac, MI, *Necklace and Earrings.* **Right:** Tim McInery, Wylie E. Groves High School, Birmingham, MI, *Airplane Pin*

James Evans: Jewelry & Small Objects
Prime Canadian Crafts, Toronto, Canada
May 28–June 9, 1984
by Anne Barros

A search for "linearality" is James Evans's definition of his show at Prime Canadian Crafts. Based on a series of line drawings, the 72 pieces of jewelry and small sculpture were fabricated of stainless steel wire then painted in flat black and red. As a show, it was definitely of the minimalist esthetic. Evans's line work, however, is not so bare as to be boring. It is fresh with surprises. A neckpiece angles its way around the body and then makes a subtle change of direction that is accented in red to become the focus of the piece. The brooches sit up three dimensionally to interact with the space around the wearer. Earrings repeat the theme of breaking angles with red interventions. The straight-edged geometry is softened by comparison with subtle curves or twists, or, best of all, with smart red circles. There are a few pieces incorporating slate uncharacteristically shaped into a hemisphere and set into a steel plinth. These remind one of Evans's past work and it is good to see the continuity.

For some years Evans has been absorbed by line work on the surface of his jewelry. He has explored chiselling silver, gold and steel, and then drawing with graphite on slate. This show represents the liberation of line from its drawing board of silver or slate. His disembodied graphics are most appealing in the neckpieces and brooches and least in the bracelets where they wear with a bit more difficulty. Admittedly, function is not one of Evans's main concerns. He cares more about the visual statement and the unisex quality of his pieces. Neither is he bothered about references in his own work to the linear neoprene on steel pieces of England's David Watkins. Evans has in his evolution as a jeweler freely borrowed ideas he likes but he has always made them his own.

As one of a small group of Canadian jewelers involved with innovative jewelry on an international level (he is in *Jewelry International* and *Contemporary Jewelry of the Americas, Australia, Europe and Japan*), Evans displays for Canadians an awareness of what is happening in the art jewelry world. For example, one of his goals for this show is the "democratization of jewelry" or simply, prices that appeal to a wide range of people. When asked where he is headed next, Evans replies with his usual tongue-in-cheek: "large organic gold rings with pearls." ■



Left: James Evans, *Neckpiece* red and black painted stainless steel, 1984. Photo: Jeremy Jones.
Below: Richard Prillaman, *untitled dart*, wood, brass, silver, steel, dart 7½" l.

Objects D'Dart
Fashion Institute of Technology,
New York City
June 7–17, 1984
organized by Chuck Schwarz
by Ken Coleman

The "Objects D'Dart" exhibition or, more fondly, the "Art Dart" show, could be seen as a sharp counterpoint to the "Jewelry: U.S.A." exhibition at the American Craft Museum. But who wants to get stuck with that serious approach when the "Art Dart" show was so obviously a playful display of the creative spirit. The aim of this review is to throw out an observation or two but certainly to hurl no barbed criticisms.

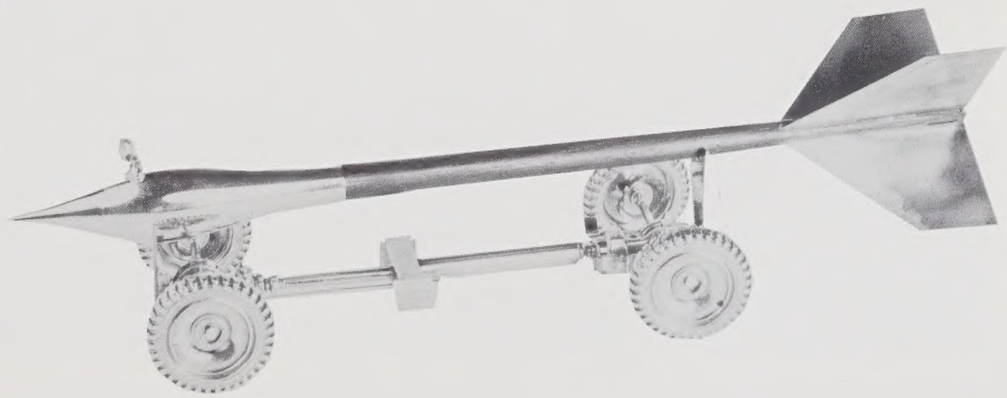
The "Art Dart" show was first exhibited at the university museum at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, where it was billed as a "show of darts, personal interpretations and creative deviations." Subsequently, it was shown at FIT concurrent with the Society of North American Goldsmith's conference.

Viewing the "Art Dart" show was something like being a kid in a candy store. And by the way it was presented at FIT—all jumbled together in a couple of cases—that impression was heightened.

The best score in the popular vote went to Richard Prillamen's untitled dart on a chassis with driver/rider. It won the dart trophy which was made and spiked by Richard Mawdsley. Even with this clue it was difficult to settle on a favorite.

The darts ranged in concept and size from Bill Boysen's 18" long blown-glass dart to Lee Wurtzburger's minimal darts made of toothpicks, thread, needles and acetate. There was Bill Rodland's blunt *Opponent's Dart* and an untitled dart from Tayeko Yamada that was festooned with ribbons and little bells. Sali Katz rose to the occasion with *Dart Vader* which used the appropriate plastic head on the tail of the dart.

There were other darts that piqued one's interest, some because of their visual quality, others through a play on words, or both. Whatever the reason, the show was viewed with a smile and that's what it was all about. ■



Japanese Designers in New York
Gallery 91, New York City
March 8–31, 1984
by Pam Levine

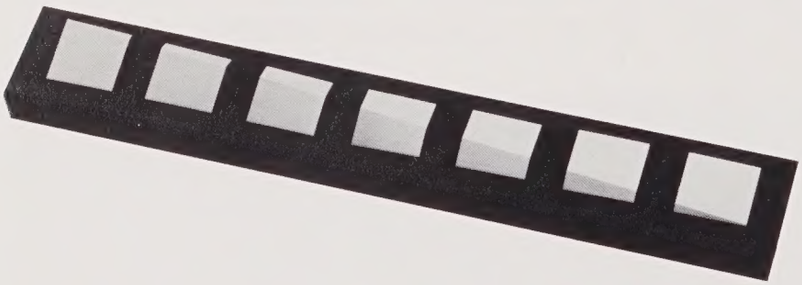
Noteworthy in Gallery 91's exhibition of 10 Japanese designers from various design fields, ranging from wood furniture and ceramic vessels to wall lighting and illuminated sculpture, was jeweler/designer Noriaki Niikura. Niikura exhibited two pin series in addition to paperweights, salt and pepper shakers and a cufflink and shirt stud ensemble.

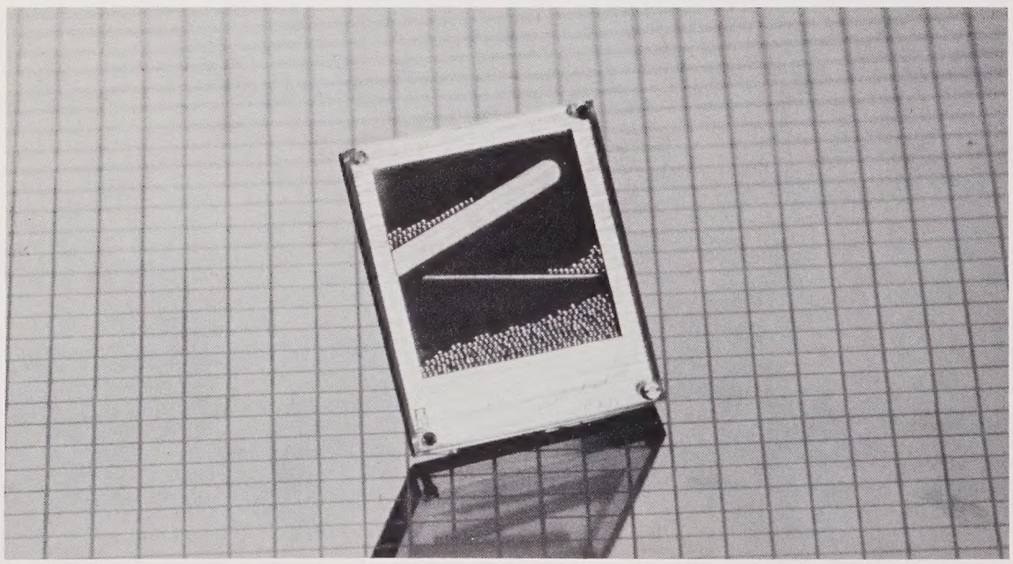
The three brass paperweights were sanded block forms, each with the front upper edge cut, leaving a shiny facet. The facet increased in size from the left block to the right. When placed side by side the three paperweights would read as one design, yet when separated, each form would function successfully as a single design. This work is deliberately void of elaborate detail, Niikura believes that metal should express his feelings and ideas in the purest, simplest form.

The cufflink and shirt studs constructed of two-toned steel set into yellow gold frames carried out the same concept as above, each unit acting as an important member of a total picture. The subtlety of the silver and gray tones contrasted well to the yellow frames.

Mounted on a long narrow black strip along the wall were the pin series. The first, a set of seven sterling silver pins simply expanded upon the same ideas that the cufflinks and functional items illustrated. The second series of pins were appropriately named *Windows*. These consisted of an acrylic cover screwed into a sterling back which encased a variety of elements. The *Windows* were whimsical and imaginative, each pin telling a different story. One had fine sterling granules that floated freely with three flat gold shapes; when the pin was moved ever so slightly, the design would change. Another had a folded piece of gold foil that gave a peek at a solar system of stars and planets—pitch black ebony inlayed with a one-point diamond and scattered with gold flecks. One pin, made up of five layers of acrylic sheets that sandwiched tiny gold foil shapes, gave the illusion that the gold was going into eternity. *Visual Vibration,* consisted of a pierced steel grid holding four precious gems which were connected visually by fine granules that drew lines from one gem to the next. These lines also appeared as rays of light illuminating from the diamond.

Just as one piece of work comprised of so many individual pieces tells a story, so does Niikura's collection combine to establish a strong and sensitive design statement.■





Noriaki Niikura—**top:** *Pin/Wall Object,* sterling silver, 37×37mm each, 1982; **above:** *Pin/Wall Object,* sterling silver, 22k and 18k, ebony, acrylic, 30×36mm, 1982

The Cutting Edge: the Knifemaker's Art
Edward H. Merrin Gallery of Antiquities, New York City
June 20–July 6, 1984
by Marcia Lewis

This exhibition of contemporary work was displayed at the Edward H. Merrin Gallery of New York, which ordinarily shows only antiquities because the owner is keenly interested in knives. He therefore invited Ken Coleman (currently with Parson's School of Design) to organize this invitational of blades by 14 American artists. The two-dozen pieces ran the gamut between traditional and pure fantasy.

What could only be assumed to be blade forms, not actual knives, were the pieces by Beverly Shawn. With titles like *Deadly Road Ahead* she has told a little story using images pierced from various nonferrous metals and bolted onto a shiny steel blade. These pieces more than any of the others stretched the esthetic canon of form and function which was the underlying theme of the exhibition.

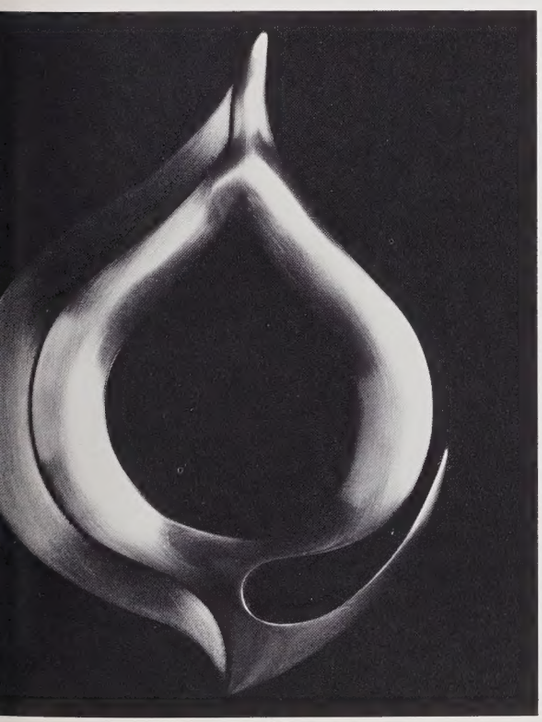
Mike Croft showed great range in his approach to making knives. His *Whale of a Chopper* was humorous, using inlayed steel and carved walnut for the tail-of-a-handle. His *Bitty Blades* are funny to pronounce but the little things fit on your fingers as perfectly and sculpturally as any serious rings.

There were several clever innovations in this show which demonstrated that the participants were exploring new avenues of designing rather than copying or imitating all the good knives of history. Garret De Ruiter invented a letter opener with a tiny curved blade set into a full-sized handle which effectively opens any envelope without damaging its contents and is less dangerous to have around than the

usual ones. Mary Hughes combined her obvious mastery of metalsmithing skills to produce a piece of sculpture which also chops vegetables. Its blade is so gracefully incorporated into the handle that its usefulness as a tool was not immediately apparent. Bill Buchner's Damascus steel knife was a wonder of technical accomplishment as well as a beautiful visual statement. Its handle fits nicely in the hand, the thumb falls automatically into the hollow formed there for it and the blade just goes on to do its task. All of this, along with the perfect layers of folded steel which gave it a wood grain pattern.

The more traditional style blades in the show were an herb cutter by Bob Coogan and one by Peter Jagoda. The curvilinear shape of the herb knife is familiar from days gone by as is the handle shape of Jagoda's piece, complete with a hole in the end to secure it with a thong. But looking closely, what appears to be orange wood is instead resin-coated cloth called Micarta. Micarta has become a traditional material of knifemakers owing to its fine working qualities and extreme resistance to wear and stain. Pakawood is a similar material which is a perfect substitute for ivory. Another new, now traditional material being used by all knifemakers is called "Pressed Fiber." It is laminated into a handle in strips between metal and ivory or wood, plastic and so on. Besides adding many nice color variations, it allows for any expansion or contraction to occur. All these materials can be obtained from any good knifemaking supply company.

The Merrin Gallery is to be commended for its willingness to extend its boundaries beyond antiquities to include what will surely prove to be some of the fine antiquities of tomorrow. ■



Natalie Paul: Recent Works

Venture Gallery, Lathrup Village, Michigan
May 12–June 6, 1984
by Sally Rogers

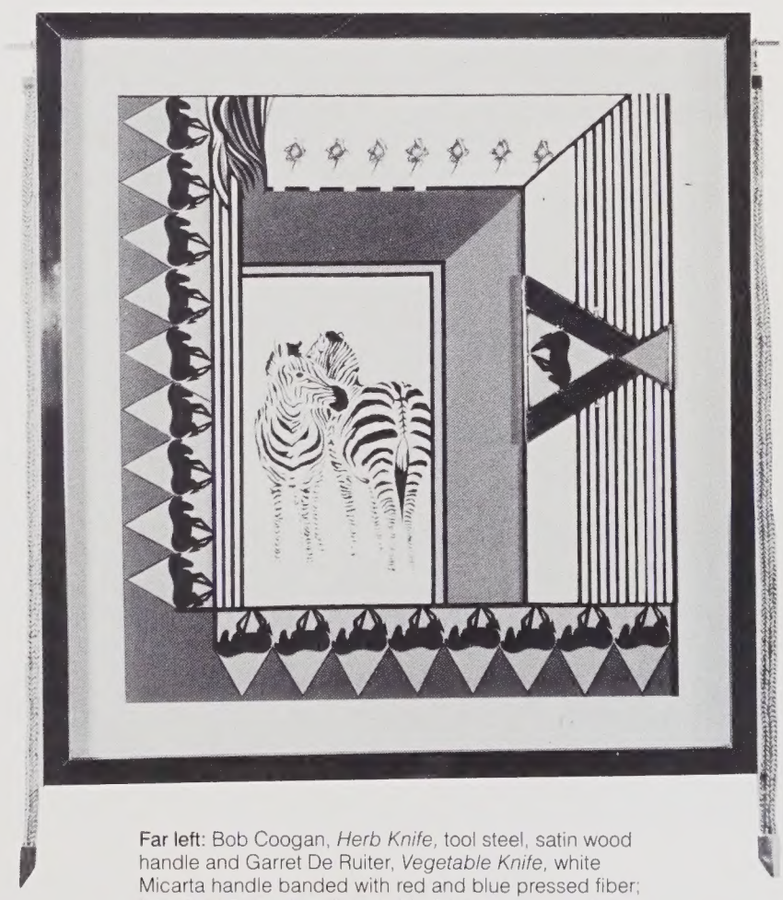
Probably the most vociferous argument in the crafts world in recent years has been the on-going debate concerning the validity of traditional craft work—ceramic, fiber, glass, metal, wood—in the art realm. Continually in question has been the discrepancy between a work of obvious functional use, traditional to crafts media, and the more esthetic or conceptual concerns of the fine arts of drawing, painting and sculpture. The past quarter century has seen a major expansion of endeavor in the crafts world to approach a resolution of the problem of combining functional objects with enhanced esthetic appeal. Natalie Paul's recent exhibition at the Venture Gallery offered an exciting and successful solution to this dichotomy, with an integration of meticulously finished jewelry and finely detailed, framed wall pieces.

On a miniature scale, the wall pieces, all less than a square foot in dimension, were fanciful paintings in various combinations of paper, paint, wood and metal. Ranging from nearly deco patterns to fantasy worlds to personal projections, all were characterized by an attention to detail and a precision of execution. They were, of themselves, striking images; closer inspection further revealed a pleasurable combination, as each work was designed to display a carefully worked brooch, pin, earrings or other objects of adornment.

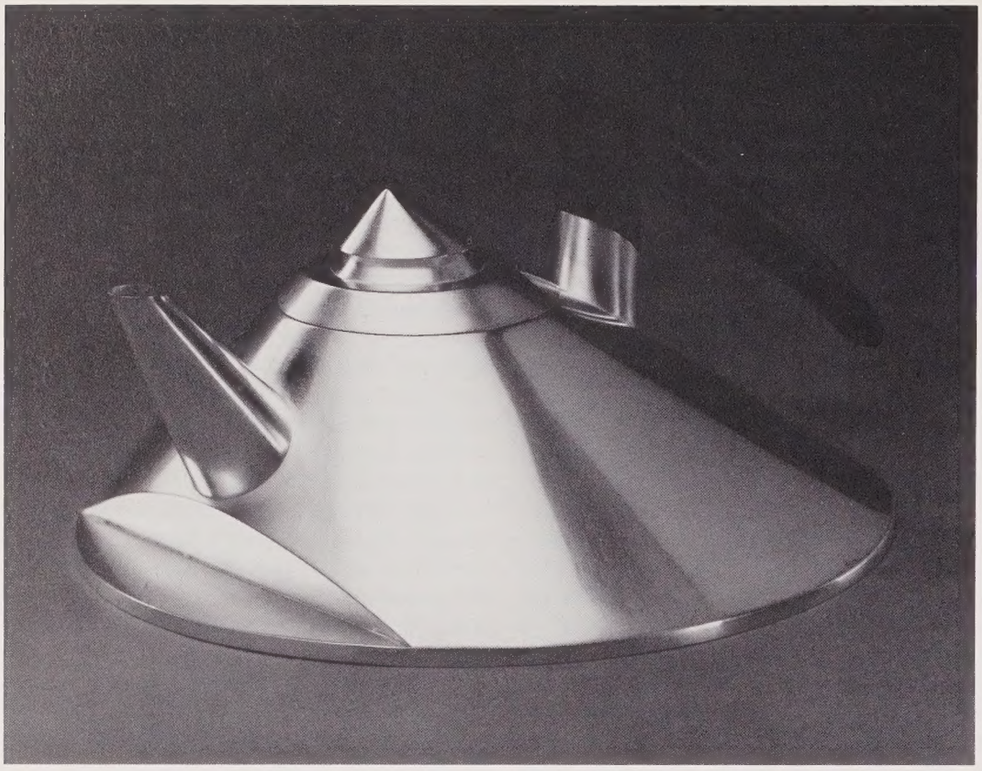
Paul's concern for detail and finish, as evidenced in her painting, came across strongly in delicate fabrications of silver, sterling, enamels and stones. As fine jewelry, the works stood on their own merit, and when they were joined with the wall pieces both painting and metalwork were enhanced. A delightful indecision resulted—did the jewelry echo the painting, or did the painting play with the metal's imagery?

Aside from the obvious artistic appeal of these works was the added benefit of an integral storage place for the jewelry. Beautiful objects of adornment frequently are relegated to closed boxes, containers or drawers, when not being worn, their visual merits often hidden from view. The fabrication of these wall pieces insures the perfect showcase for each piece.

Paul's innovative approach provides a continual display for her metalwork, one that assures an on-going pleasure in the delicate and decorative work. Here, indeed, is an integration of functional and esthetic considerations, a fusion of the worlds of craft and art. ■



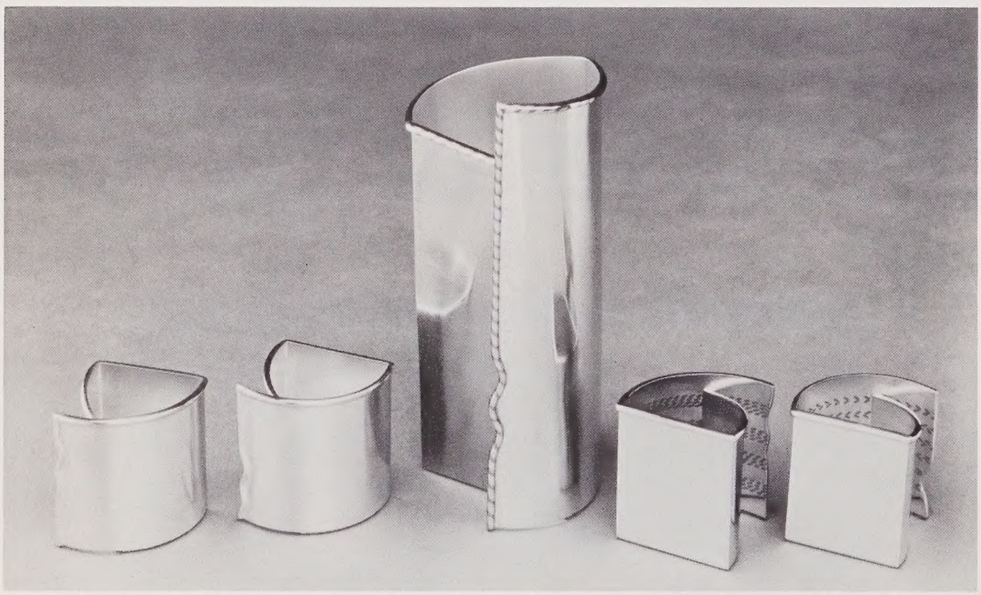
Far left: Bob Coogan, *Herb Knife,* tool steel, satin wood handle and Garret De Ruiter, *Vegetable Knife,* white Micarta handle banded with red and blue pressed fiber; **left:** Mary C. Hughes, *Vegetable Chopper,* brass, steel, devcon. Photos: Stan Ries. **Above:** Natalie Paul, *The Zebras Rose,* painting/neckpiece, acrylic paint, wood, sterling silver, enamel, 13 × 12 × 1¼"

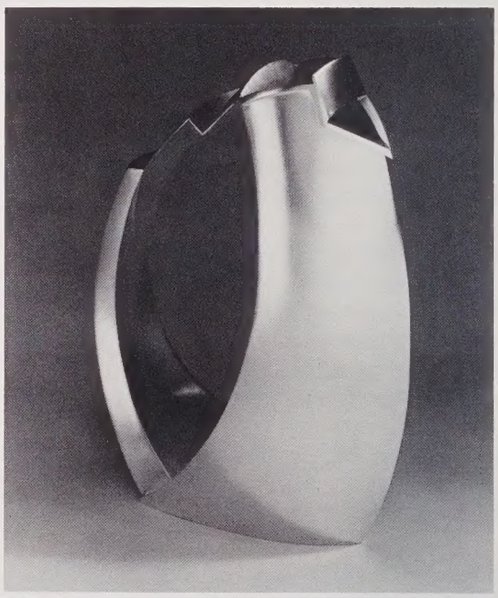


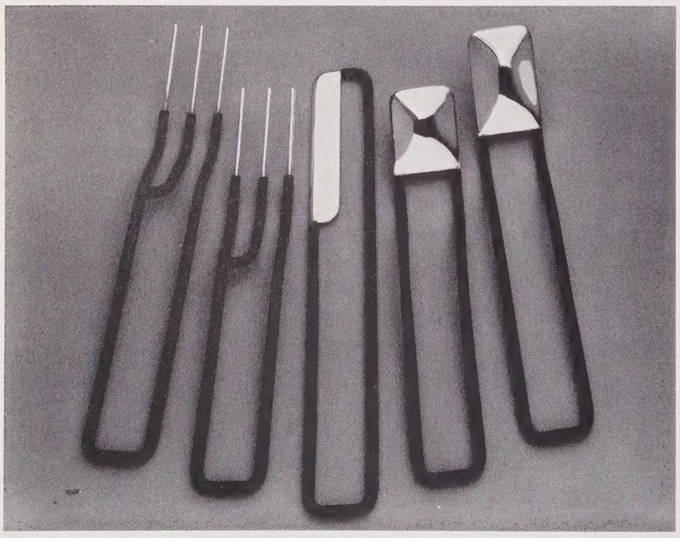
Statements in Sterling/84
Lever House, New York City
May 30-June 19, 1984

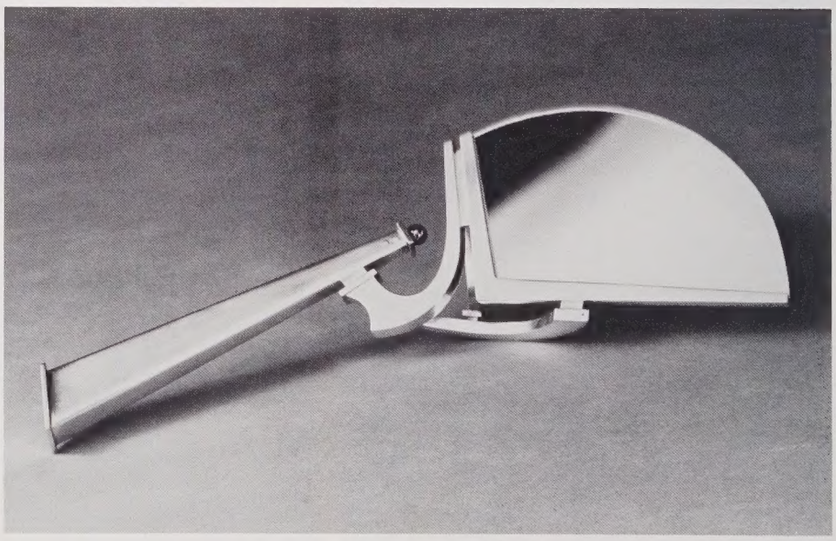
The 25th Sterling Design Competition, sponsored by the Sterling Silversmiths Guild of America, for the American design students this year emphasized functional forms for the tabletop of 169 entries, 10 non awards, including Mark Fortune's *Sterling Teapot,* first prize, Lee Boroson's *Saki Serving Pitcher,* second prize, and Kye-yeon Son's Liquor Decanter with Four Cups, third prize. The special prize for best flatware entry went to John Horn for his five-piece place setting. Another 51 entries were chosen for exhibition.

Judges of the 1984 competition were Jamie Bennett, Kurt Matzdorf and Frank Perry, Director of Design at Oneida Silversmiths. ■









Clockwise, from top: First Prize Winner, Mark E. Fortune, *Teapot;* Second Prize Winner, Lee Boroson, *Saki Serving Pitcher;* Fourth Prize Winner, Heather N. Williams, *Hand Mirror;* Special Flatware Prize Winner, John E. Horn, *Five-Piece Place Setting;* Third Prize Winner, Kye-yeon Son, *Liquor Decanter with Four Cups*

Gorham:
Masterpieces in Metal
by Tim McCreight

Gorham Company was 45 years old when its 2,000-ounce "Century Vase" celebrating the nation's centennial won great acclaim at the Philadelphia Exposition. Over the next hundred years Gorham maintained its prominent position through both its design innovation and industrial development. The exhibition recently assembled and presented by the Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, from October, 1983 through February, 1984 further confirmed, if any proof was needed, that the Gorham tradition of excellence is well-founded and deserves our recognition.

The show represented a huge effort, collecting over a dozen presentation pieces, almost 50 framed renderings, and over 100 other objects, almost all in silver. A unique feature of the exhibit was its panoramic view. Since Gorham has been a leader in holloware and flatware since the mid-1800s, a comprehensive collection like this offers a valuable historical survey. Particularly when augmented by Charles Carpenter's excellent book, *Gorham Silver 1831–1981,* the history of Gorham traces a pattern of design trends and economic shifts that is as fascinating to the social historian as it is to the metalsmith.

The Gorham Company was started in 1831 by Jabez Gorham, who built his business primarily on the making of coin silver spoons. Working out of a small frame building on Steeple Street in Providence, Rhode Island, Gorham and a handful of employees began each day by pouring an ingot of .800 silver. Using tin dies and traditional hand methods, each worker produced about a dozen spoons in an 11-hour workday. These were marketed through stores and sold by peddlers who traveled throughout rural New England.

In 1848, John Gorham bought out his father's share of the company. John's vision and aggressive business practices pushed the company out of the pack of small shops making similar wares. After doubling his capital by going into partnerships with his cousin, Gorham Thurber, John went to England in 1852 to buy a steam-powered drop press. Its inventor, James Nasmyth had been trying unsuccessfully for several years to persuade the factories of Sheffield and Birmingham of the value of his press. He was delighted to learn that his machine had at last found an enthusiastic backer and delivered a press to Providence the following year. While in Europe, John Gorham also convinced several designers and craftsmen to emigrate to Rhode Island to work for him, establishing a pattern of hiring that was to continue well into the 20th century.

The major personality of this wave of imported designers was George Wilkinson, who came to work for Gorham in 1857. For the 30-year period beginning with his ascension to the position of chief designer in 1860, Wilkinson led the company in an ambitious course of growth and diversity. Wilkinson directed several styles including a High-Victorian, Renaissance Revival, Neo-Classical and Japanese-inspired direction. He extended his authority into the daily workings of the company by serving as plant manager and is largely responsible for the expansion and modernization of the company that continued through the latter half of the 19th century.

The several decades bridging the 19th and 20th century were dominated by a new designer and a new president at Gorham, W.C. Codman and Edward Holbrook, respectively. Holbrook was an aggressive tycoon of the silver business, intent on becoming master of the industry. He took over the company at a time when it had just built and moved into the largest silver manufacturing plant in the world, located in the Elmwood section of Providence. Preoccupied with the boardroom side of the business, Holbrook needed a strong personality to direct the design and technical operations of the plant. He found such a person in William Christmas Codman, an ecclesiastical designer from England. Codman came to the States in 1892 when he was 52 years old, and retired in 1914 after working for Gorham for 23 years. His tenure at Gorham was marked by many awards and distinctions. One of his masterpieces is the lady's writing table pictured here. It illustrates his love for luxurious surface treatment, his knowledge of woodworking and exotic materials and his ability to combine many elements into a controlled and elegant design. During this time he acquired 55 design patents for flatware, including one for *Chantilly,* the most popular flatware pattern in the world. He designed hundreds of pieces, and his workmanship put Gorham at the leading edge of the

Tea and Coffee Service designed by Erik Magnussen, silver with ivory insulators, 1926

Arts and Crafts Movement in America.

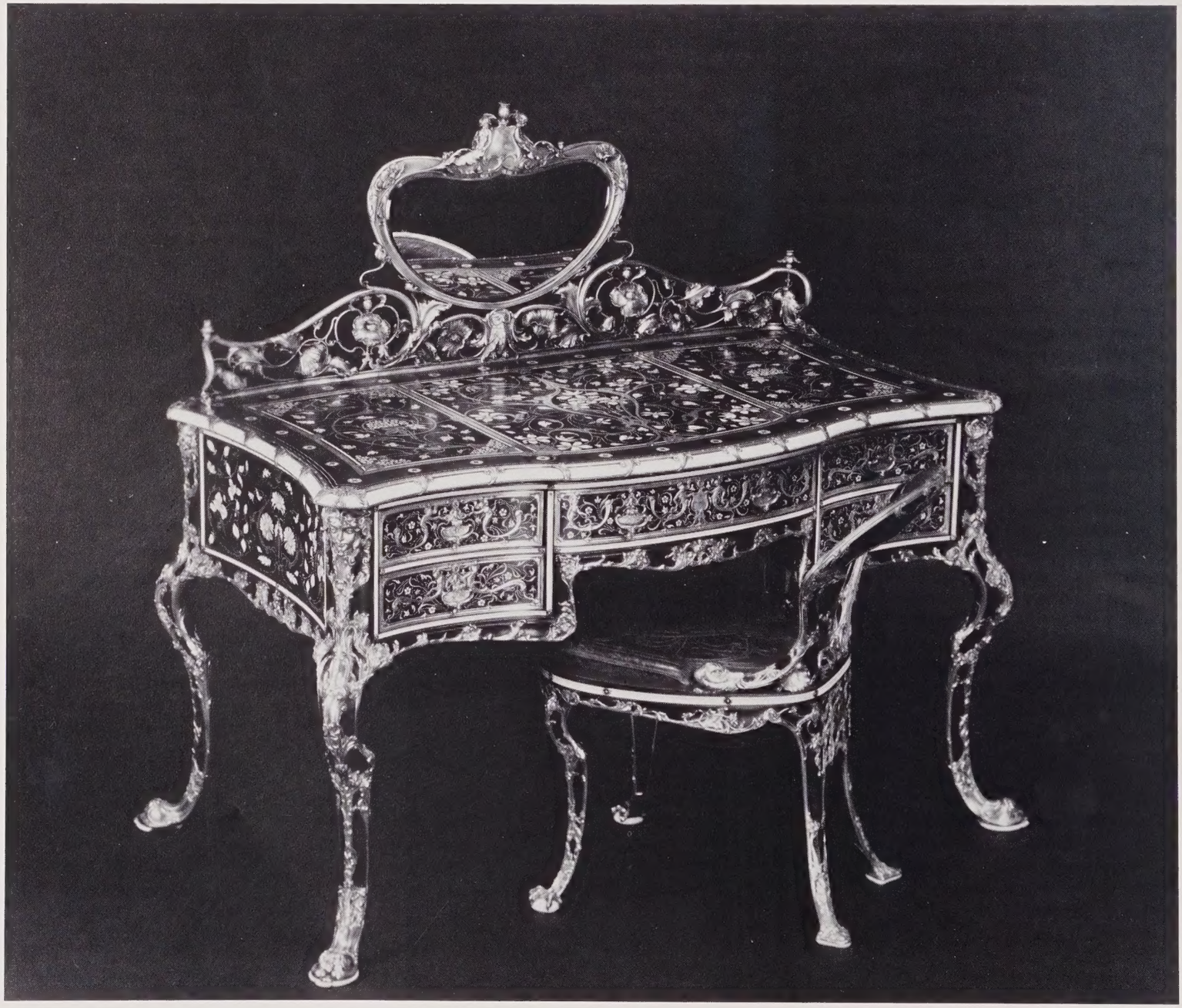
We can assume that Codman's early English training familiarized him with the Arts and Crafts philosophy of integral design and the value of handwork. He had brought with him from his homeland seeds that were slowly to mature into a line of art pieces called *Martelé,* meaning "hand-hammered" in French. The look of these designs is Art Nouveau, inspired by sinewy natural motifs and turning frequently to exotic materials and unexpected proportions. The deeper value of the *Martelé* line lies in its philosophy. Under Codman's direction the company gave up its assembly-line methods for art pieces, allowing a single workman to make each piece from start to finish. Although it had been the tradition for designers to specify every detail of a piece, the *Martelé* line originated with rough drawings interpreted by the worker through forming or chasing processes. This digression from traditional methods was a tremendous gamble, and apparently one that paid off. Though these art pieces were not big moneymakers for the company, they earned Gorham prestige in both the United States and Europe.

During World War I Gorham suffered an economic decline that lasted several years. Leadership of the company had fallen to John Holbrook, who lacked his father's drive, while the position of chief designer had passed to William Codman, son of William C. Lacking his father's talent and vision, he became stridently reactionary, imposing binders on the company's design outlook and subsequently diminishing the lead it had achieved around the turn of the century. After several years of turbulence, a businessman named Edmund Mayo became president and began to regain the company's stature. Though William Codman remained chief designer, Mayo hired a noted Danish silversmith, Erik Magnussen, to work independently of Codman. His refined shapes and unadorned surfaces were antithetical to Codman's Colonial Revival designs. These two directions split the company, and the esthetic direction of the company wavered, becoming secondary to its commercial growth.

Economic and cultural changes over the last 30 years have diminished both the appreciation of and market for large silver pieces. These changes, of course, have affected Gorham, where one-of-a-kind pieces are now far less important to the company than they once were.

The Exhibition

I walked into the museum hall expecting to see many of the vast punch bowls and soup tureens that emerge from unknowable sources for occasions like this. I did see them, but there was more. The exhibit was installed in a single room in a straightforward, if not particularly imaginative, arrangement. The walls of pale beige fabric were hung with large color renderings, each in the same simple oak frame. The center of the room displayed two exquisite small tables, each a work of



untold labor. The pieces were arranged more or less chronologically, which meant that they were also grouped by style. A case at one end of the room offered examples of several techniques in various stages of completion, each with an explanation of the technical process.

The punch bowls, so massive and imposing, were difficult to assimilate at once. In most cases, the raised form had been lost, beneath a frosting of high relief and complex chasing. This is so far removed from the metalwork familiar to most of us that it offers no easy point of entry. I found myself standing in front each piece looking for a section I could understand. This is not to denigrate the high level of craftsmanship these pieces embody, but to suggest that the response they generate is not so much an immediate, heartfelt appreciation, but a more distant and thoughtful respect.

The several cases of spoons and small containers held a more vital attraction. The spoons included some very early pieces, whose traditional fiddle handles owe their charm to miserly thinness and evident use. Also on display were more elaborate pierced serving pieces and ladles, some with handles straying so far from convention as to be almost kitsch. The Victorian eclecticism, for instance, that introduces oriental motifs to gothic patterns has a naive daring. The cigarette cases and matchsafes were less flamboyant, but because of their size they presented an easy reference to contemporary work.

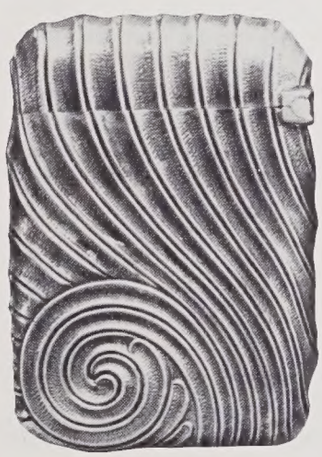
Several examples of the Scandinavian Modern look made a welcome opportunity to see at firsthand work for the most part shown previously in books. The confidence of these forms and their impeccable workmanship were striking. In this context of highly ornamented pieces, they are a particularly effective statement.

There was, as well, unexpected humor in the exhibit. The last years of the 19th century—adolescent years of the Arts and Crafts and Art Nouveau—movements instigated many fantasy pieces. An example is the trompe l'oeil plate made entirely of silver. It resembles a woven straw disk onto which a fancy dinner napkin has been carelessly dropped. The design is eye-catching, the workmanship elegant and the effect of the whole is one of inspired humor. Another example is a pair of spoons, again made entirely of silver. The bowl appears to be a shard of beaten metal, and the handle a bamboo twig. Though the spoon was made as a single whole, careful carving implies that the pieces are lashed together with a rough cord, like some tribal utensil. Fresh, unusual and preposterous enough to be funny. There is as well a large pitcher resembling two snakes curled around one another and a mammouth turtle that is actually a soup tureen, and so on.

The renderings were a pleasant surprise. These were usually actual-size gouache drawings, often on gray or tan paper. Particularly in the case of the older work, where the flourishes of the Rococo Revival might hold little appeal, these drawings came off better than the actual silver pieces. Of couse it is a late-20th century perception that is so crass, but that the drawings should have such a life of their own was an unexpected pleasure.

If there was a disappointment in the show it was that the work was somewhat crowded together. But despite this, the exhibition was a potent and pleasant survey, particularly timely in this generation of businessmiths concerned with the interplay of creative work and the rigors of manufacturing.

An exhibition of work produced by Gorham Manufacturing was on view at the Museum of Art, RISD, in Providence, Rhode Island, from October 14, 1983 to February 4, 1984. Information for this review is drawn also from the book *Gorham Silver 1831–1981* by Charles H. Carpenter, Jr. ■

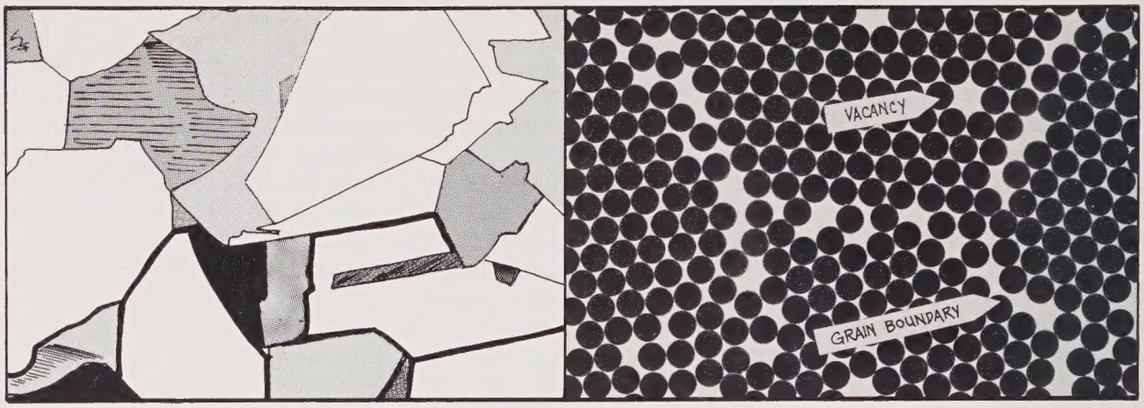


Opposite page: *Ladies Writing Table* designed by William C. Codman as an exhibition piece, ebony with sterling fittings, inlaid with exotic woods, ivory and mother-of-pearl, 1903 (Museum of Art, RISD). **Above:** *Soup Tureen* designed by Antoine Heller, sterling silver, 1887. **Far right:** *Vase* designed by William C. Codman, sterling silver, 17" h., 1894. **Right:** *Matchbox*, sterling silver, 1888

TECHNICAL BRIEFS

by Tim McCreight

This entry marks the beginning of a new, regular column in Metalsmith. *It will deal with technical concerns of interest to a wide audience, addressing topics as diverse as vanguard technology and ancient arts. It will answer questions from readers and respond to suggestions, always trying to explain in simple terms the magic and wonder of working with metal. For this first column I've chosen an obvious place to start: the very stuff of smithing—metal. I'd like to thank Dr. Peter Sexton of Handy & Harman for his important help in writing this.*



1 Artist's rendition of grains in metal when viewed through a microscope. The dark line shows grain boundaries. 2 In this stylized model each circle represents an atom. This junction of four grains shows how the patterns impinge when they meet, causing grain boundaries comprised of "dislocations." Note also the mid-grain vacancies.

Metals exist as atoms, clustered together in crystals. In the case of elements like silver and gold only one kind of atom is involved. In alloys like sterling two or more elements are combined in a solid solution, usually with the effect of creating a material with properties different from those of its components.

In crystalline materials like metals the atoms tend to arrange themselves into regular, geometric patterns. It is the behavior of these structures that is usually of most concern to metalworkers. Thorough understanding of the behavior of crystals is an intensive study and what follows has been necessarily simplified. By looking at a "day in the life" of a sample of metal perhaps we can begin to understand the effects we observe in the studio.

Let's begin with an ounce of sterling scrap. Rather than starting with the ore, which is a subject all by itself, we'll pick up the story after the metal has been refined and alloyed. Imagine that the metal is being heated and will be poured into an ingot mold. The torch flame used to heat the metal is a mixture of fuel and air, the adjustments being contrived to see that all the oxygen in the vicinity is being used to support the flame. This is done with a reducing flame; that is, a flame with a surplus of fuel. Oxygen has an inclination to attach itself to the copper atoms of our alloy to form a compound called copper oxide. This dark gray or brownish material is unattractive and reduces the working/joining properties of the original alloy. In addition to using the proper flame, as we melt the scrap we'll introduce a chemical (flux) that is hungry for oxygen and will divert it away from the sterling and into its own compounds. When the metal is completely fluid, we'll pour it into a cast iron or steel mold.

Because the cooling process is critical to the structure of the metal, the mold has been heated to several hundred degrees Fahrenheit. As the alloy cools the atoms slow down and assume a geometric structure with symmetry. The first atoms to form a group take up an orientation at random. Adjacent atoms will "grow" beside the first, assuming orientation in the same way that a domino game develops block by block.

If we caused crystallization in a piece of metal from a single starting point the resulting perfectly ordered single crystal, if it were free of defects, would be about a hundred times stronger than ordinary structural materials. This is possible only in the laboratory, since normal conditions result in a polycrystalline material that contains millions of defects on the atomic level. A very slow growth rate like 1mm per day requires deposition of 100 layers of atoms per second. When you consider that our ingot is recrystallizing in a few seconds, it is no wonder that the organization has more than a few irregularities.

Illustration 2 shows a stylized closeup view of this area. Notice that the pattern is interrupted. As the crystals grow they impinge on one another causing **grain boundaries** made up of **dislocations.** Together with **vacancies,** these are part of what allow a metal to be deformed. When stress is applied (e.g., when you draw a wire) the crystals slide over each other in a behavior that is characteristic of metals.

Another important factor in malleability is the structure of the crystal itself. There are seven distinct lattice systems; the greater the symmetry of a crystal, the easier it will be to deform the metal. One of the lattices that allows for easy movement in any of three directions is called face-centered cubic. Given the extreme malleability common among them, it's not surprising that this crystal arrangement is shared by gold, silver, copper, lead and aluminum.

Another factor in the microstructure of metals is **grain size** and its related factor, boundary development. The dark line in the lower part of the first drawing shows the edge where one crystal meets another. This is called the grain boundary. A material with small grains will have more grain boundary than one in which the grains are large. Since boundaries have a lot to do with the mechanical properties of a metal, their growth becomes very important.

Grain growth is a function of time and temperature. When we last checked our ingot of sterling, the crystals were beginning to grow. As neighboring clusters bump (technically, "impinge") into each other a grain boundary is formed. If many clusters are forming simultaneously in a small space they won't have a chance to get very large before they impinge on one another. On the other hand, if the cooling is slow, fewer seed crystals (called nuclei) are formed and each cluster can grow to a larger size. This is why we heated the ingot mold. The slow cooling will cause slow recrystallization, which in turn will yield larger crystals, which means fewer grain boundaries, which means a more malleable structure. Now, isn't that easy?

No, as a matter of fact, there's a rub. The large-grained structure has less strength than a fine-grained one. It is malleable but weak. Our first step after pouring the ingot then is to break up the grains into a smaller size. Cold-working by lightly planishing the ingot will increase the strength of the metal. One or two courses of planishing should do the trick.

Now the ingot is annealed. Increased temperature will stress relieve the ingot. We need to heat the ingot to the point where the atoms are mobile enought to reorient themselves into a less stressful structure. For sterling we'll heat to around 1100°F (593°C), which is a dull red color as viewed in dim light. Heating above this point has no advantage. After bringing the metal to temperature, we'll hold it there for a few seconds to allow the annealing to occur.

After allowing the ingot to cool for about a minute we could safely quench it; the quenching medium would have

no effect on the structure. We could planish or roll the ingot until it work-hardened, when we would repeat the annealing as before. We would continue until the resulting sheet was the desired thickness.

Let's further suppose that we have cut this sheet into a number of cunningly clever pieces and want to solder them together. The rules for soldering are familiar, but how much do we know about what's really going on in there?

Since most metals have a tendency to combine with oxygen and since this tendency is accelerated by heat, as soon as we turn the torch onto the metal we create a skin of oxide that will interfere with soldering. We usually prevent this from happening with a compound that will absorb the oxygen before it can combine with the metal. This is called flux, from the Latin word meaning, "to flow," which is what we want the solder to do.

As we heat metal its atoms become agitated and move faster. With increased heat the atoms are further apart: we observe that metals expand with increased temperature. If a liquid is brought into contact with a structure like this, its fluidity acts to draw it up into the joint where some of the solder diffuses into the workpiece.

A solder is chosen to melt at a temperature that gives appropriate diffusion into the pieces to be joined. When heat is removed the solder will recrystallize. Since the bond of the solder is integral to the metal, the joint is very strong.

Understanding the physics of microstructure can help the metalsmith to better ply his craft. A similar knowledge of chemistry and thermodynamics will come in handy as well. Beyond the practical benefits, this kind of investigation is fascinating all by itself and manages to extend the pleasure of working with metals. ■

Send questions for this column to: Tim McCreight, 23 Mill Road Circle, Boylston, MA 01505.

The Flexible Shaft Machine: Jewelry Techniques
by Harold O'Connor. Dunconor Books, P.O. Box 17324, Denver, CO 80217, 1983. 47 pages, over 70 black-and-white illustrations, $8.95

Harold O'Connor's latest book is both logical and well laid out and will be a valuable reference to anyone using the flexshaft machine for either production work or experimentation. The tool, the flexshaft machine, is not glorified in the text but rather a detailed breakdown of its components and possible uses on woods, precious metals, waxes, plastics, ivory and other material is illustrated. This text not only describes creative directions but process and direct results.

Although the book is directed at the jewelry field its many examples can be utilized by craftsmen or technicians needing refined and detailed cutting, carving, grinding, sanding, polishing, stonesetting and inlaying information. A wood detailer, plastic modelmaker, ceramist or sculptor would certainly profit also by having this text as a reference to possibilities and time-saving techniques. Custom-designed wax lathes, a table saw and stone cutting unit are also shown, as well as accessory equipment.

Harold O'Connor is a dedicated goldsmith and teacher, and other than having Harold O'Connor working at the bench with you, the next most valuable help is his book.
—Randall Gunther

Setting of Gemstones
by Walter Zeiss. Rühle-Diebener-Verlag, Stuttgart, Germany, 1984. 125 pages, $8.75

This book has apparently grown out of the author's experience as a commercial setter and instructor for the German jewelry trade. It reads like class notes from Advanced Gemsetting 305, and without the instructor they don't offer much help.

One of the nice things I can say about this book is to commend the accuracy of the title. The instruction here covers only the setting of stones—not how to make the setting, nothing about the stones, little about the appropriateness of a particular setting for a particular use. It is written for the person who makes a living setting stones into pieces of jewelry that have been designed and made by others. It occurs to me that this is a relatively small market.

This small volume was written in German and suffers in the English translation. Improper grammar and awkward sentence structure slow down the reading. The instructions are often repetitive, further increasing the "user unfriendliness" of the book. While the text at times goes into picayune detail, at other times it glosses over what would seem to be necessary information. A phrase that came up often enough to frustrate me was, "It is crucial that the fit be proper." No explanation of what the proper fit was, nor how to achieve it, just make very sure you get it right. The tone throughout was somewhat rigid, though I guess this is typical of trade education.

The book is full of drawings, and these were usually helpful. They were blurred in the copy I had, making them a little hard to figure out, but usually worth the effort. They were easier to read than the text.

Because this book covers setting to the exclusion of related topics, it is not appropriate for beginners. Its rigid and narrow attitude are best augmented by experience. However, if you have enough experience to understand this book, you probably don't need it.
—Tim McCreight

Die Granulation by Jochem Wolters. D.W. Callwey, Munich, Germany, 1983. 330 pages, 300 black-and-white and color illustrations, DM 248, approximately $100
Die Granulation is the kind of lavishly illustrated special-subject book one gives as a Christmas present while keeping a copy for oneself to take off the shelf to spend many a rainy afternoon with. The 300 black-and-white and color photographs alone justify the purchase of the book, since the text is in German. The examples of granulation work were drawn from 215 museum and private collections showing pieces older than 4000 years up to work by Sigurd Persson, John Paul Miller and Elisabeth Treskow. Especially dazzling is an Etruscan gold vessel in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 6 cm high and 10 cm in diameter covered almost entirely by 137,000 granules. Then there are pieces from areas not ordinarily associated with granulation, like an Ashante gold pendant, southern Russian earrings and a magnificent silver goldplated bracelet from the Batak of Sumatra. Wolters gives the history of granulation from 2560 BC to the present with emphasis on the cultures of Europe and western Asia and also includes the development in many other areas like central Asia, southeast Asia and the pre-columbian cultures.

The descriptions of techniques are taken from numerous historical sources, quoting the authors directly, which gives an excellent base for research and experimentation. There are charts of alloys of golds and many other combinations as ancient as a formula for a gold solder by Nabonidus of 550 BC.

This book is a valuable source of information and a true inspiration. For those who are masters in the art, it might suggest different approaches. For those who have never tried granulation, it is the right push to start. And the many photographs of jewelry pieces give such good examples to explore—maybe a new-old earring form.

This book can be ordered from: Hannelore Gabriel, Book Department, SNAG, 1469 Orsena Avenue, Madison, OH 44057. To order, check the current exchange rate of the Deutsch Mark, deduct 20% SNAG discount and add $4.00 postage.
—Hannelore Gabriel

by Deborah Norton

Some Thoughts on International Jewelry

On the second day of the 1984 Society of North American Goldsmith's conference held in June in New York City, the pragmatic theme of "Art and Industry" was briefly abandoned and esthetic concerns came to the forefront. For one-and-a-half hours three international jewelers, Wendy Ramshaw of England, Onno Boekhoudt of Holland and Yasuki Hiramatsu of Japan, mesmerized the audience with slides of metalwork from their native countries. Unlike American jewelry, which in recent years has followed a path toward technical perfection and predictable design, the international work seemed to be breaking all the rules with startlingly original results. To describe this new work the word conceptual was used over and over by each speaker. Although fascinated by what I was seeing, I was not clear on exactly what these concepts were or where they originated.

Later in the day I mentioned my confusion to Onno Boekhoudt and asked him to explain. Ironically, he finds American jewelry equally perplexing, but for very different reasons. He confessed he did not understand much of what he had seen on display at the "Jewelry USA" exhbition (see review in this issue) and at the Society of North American Goldsmith's Distinguished Member show. "The technique is fantastic," he noted, "but there are no concepts. I studied each piece but I often couldn't feel why the maker did what he or she did; why the piece was made. It seems that in America metalsmiths learn something and then feel they have to do something with it. They use the technique they have learned merely for the sake of using it. Americans want to do too much on a small surface."

From the slides Boekhoudt showed earlier in the day and from the work on display at the "Jewelry International" exhibition (see review in this issue) it was obvious that Dutch jewelers are taking a very different approach. In order to explain the origins of this conceptual trend, Boekhoudt began by talking about the post-World War II era when European jewelry, like American, fell heavily under the influence of Danish Modern design. "For 20 years the work being done in Europe was uninteresting. But in the early 60s things started to change." In 1969 there was an exhibition of Dutch jewelry that traveled to the United States but was poorly received. "The work was very minimal and the Americans didn't understand it. This was strange because minimal art came from the United States. American metalsmiths don't look at their own fine art. Maybe it's a result of the art versus craft controversy—because art has been rejecting crafts for so long, crafts has turned its back on art trends."

According to Boekhoudt the climate for contemporary art in Holland is currently very good. As a result, metalsmiths have been encouraged to take great freedom in their work. Although no one style predominates today, Dutch metalsmiths are primarily concerned with discovering new forms by redefining classical ones in new materials and sizes. To Boekhoudt, developing forms is what jewelry is all about. "Jewelry is a media in which you can concentrate on creating living forms," he said.

At this point I felt compelled to ask him about the wearability of his forms. If they are jewelry, shouldn't they be able to be worn? If not, aren't they sculpture? "Yes and no," was his answer. "Jewelry is something near to a human being. You can't deny it," he abstractly explained. "Jewelry is a detail in your surroundings. If I make something that can't be worn, it's unimportant. Jewelry is a feeling of belonging to a human being, not necessarily being worn on the body." To clarify his ideas he described his design process: "I start by making a piece of jewelry that you can easily wear. From that piece, I may then develop another form that you can't necessarily wear, but it is jewelry because the original concept on which it is based is jewelry."

Inevitably, as a practical-minded American, I had to ask him about the marketability of this conceptual work. Boekhoudt's reply suggested that economic conditions may be the underlying reason for the difference between Dutch and American metalwork. "Because the market for art jewelry in Holland is extremely small, and selling one's work is very difficult, regardless of the style or material, metalsmiths are free to explore new ideas. There is no point in trying to pander to a nonexistent market," he said, adding that he supports himself by teaching. "In America you see more people wearing jewelry than in Holland. It's easy in America to make money with jewelry. It's not necessary nor practical to discover new concepts. In Holland there are only about 50 serious metalsmiths, none of whom make a living from selling their work. There are no art jewelers working for industry. Maybe this is a good thing. It gives the artist much more freedom."

In her presentation Wendy Ramshaw approached the concept of freedom for the artist craftsman in another light. "Today in Great Britain the strength of the works produced is not in a unified link to a slowly developing esthetic tradition, but in the many forms of expression explored by jewelers. This freedom is not only due to advances in technology and the growing number of materials available to the jeweler, but to the worldwide fast exchange of information and ideas on a multimedia level. The biggest impact is that of the visual image combined with the possibility of travel. While looking in the past and in the present the jeweler can sustain a belief in looking to the future and so maintain the necessary idea that the craft of the jeweler is a worthwhile, ongoing dialogue with society as well as a means of personal expression.

"The great strength of jewelry remains in the need of individuals and groups to decorate the human body. In our society this need is expressed differently of each generation of young people—the clothes they wear, the cut of their hair, their choice of ornament and the way in which they bring together these elements. Each new grass-roots expression is fascinating and happily beyond, at least in its first manifestations, the control of the designer and mass producer.

"I am doubtful if the punks and stylists of our urban environment are the future wearers of the more sophisticated works of the artist jeweler. Theirs is already a powerful statement, and those who would make large body ornament must draw strength from the crudeness and vitality of their challenge.

"I believe the success of an object lies in the ability of the maker to fully express the idea contained within their materials, be it by means of imposing form upon the material or allowing form to arise out of it. I have not time or patience for the idea that it is better or more meaningful to work in one material rather than another—or that objects which are quickly and easily realized are less morally sound than those which become costly because they need to be slowly and skillfully worked. Clearly cost in monetary terms has no bearing on esthetic issues at all but has its own rationale."

To discover how freedom or lack of it is felt by American metalsmiths, I queried some of the people attending the conference. Pat Flynn of New Paltz, New York sees a definite lack of freedom, adding "American jewelers are underneath a rock. They seem to be making jewelry for the marketplace, making things safe and by the rules. Breaking rules is healthy, not necessarily in size but in new applications of materials." He characterized the international metals phenomenon as extremely important and hopes soon to study in Holland. Although Flynn finds the hard reality of making a living with conceptual pieces frightening, he thinks the results are worth it. "The thoughts behind the pieces are very exciting although I'm not sure how you could apply them to the mar-

HEALTH HAZARDS QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

by Linda Weiss-Edwards

ketplace. You probably can't do it unless you're subsidized."

Susan Hamlet of Stillwater, Oklahoma was equally stimulated by the international work, especially the holloware and the varieties of materials. "I'm not sure what to do with all these new ideas," she said. "Americans look stale in comparison. In the past decade Europeans were looking to us for ideas and now it's reversed."

Fred Fenster of Sun Prairie, Wisconsin was intrigued by the international work but somewhat skeptical. "The Dutch work looked a little sloppier than I would like to see," he noted. "I'm wary of this 'anything goes—if you do it, it's valid,' attitude. Experimentation is good but it's important not to lose technique."

Alf Ward of Somerset Center, Michigan took a more noncommittal approach. Having moved to this country three years ago from England, he is very aware of the difference in traditions and conditions in the United States and Europe. "Americans have more energy and enthusiasm," he said. "And you must remember that conceptual jewelry is not a great part of the English metals movement. One isn't better than the other, just different."

Sharon Church of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania summed it up succinctly: "Americans are more pragmatic—Europeans more conceptual."

To many people the slide presentations by the international jewelers were the highlight of this three-day conference. Although the majority of the time was spent doling out practical advice on how to make money and get ahead, it was reassuring that esthetic concerns created the biggest stir. Judging by the reaction of many of the conferees, especially the significant number who expressed a desire to study outside the United States, I do not think it is an exaggeration to say that American metalsmithing may be in for a change in the near future. It is a credit to the Society that it was instrumental in introducing these new concepts to a broad American audience. ■

Onsite Consultation for Artists and Schools

Every state has a free onsite consultation plan for employers who want help in recognizing and correcting health and safety hazards in their workplace. This consultation service is provided by state governments or private contractors with funding from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). The program is completely separate from OSHA's inspection efforts and issues no citations or penalties.

The program is primarily aimed at small businesses and the consultation has to be requested by the employer. In many states, the consultation service is also open to individual artists and craftspeople who have requested help. Of course schools, universities, theaters, and museums can also apply.

The consultation is confidential and consists of an onsite inspection similar to that OSHA would carry out. The consultant then makes recommendations for the correction of any health and safety problems discovered. OSHA will not be informed of the results of the consultation except in cases of imminent danger.

Alabama
Alabama Consultation Program
P.O. Box 6005
University, Alabama 35486
Telephone: (205) 348-7136

Alaska
Voluntary Compliance
Division of Occupational Safety and Health
Alaska Department of Labor
200 Annex
650 W. International Airport Road
Anchorage, Alaska 99502
Telephone: (907) 276-5013

Arizona
Consultation and Training
Arizona Division of Occupational Safety and Health
P.O. Box 19070
1624 W. Adams
Phoenix, Arizona 85005
Telephone: (602) 255-5795

Arkansas
OSHA Consultation
Arkansas Department of Labor
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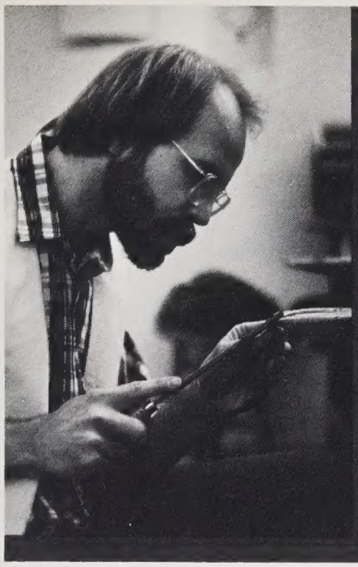

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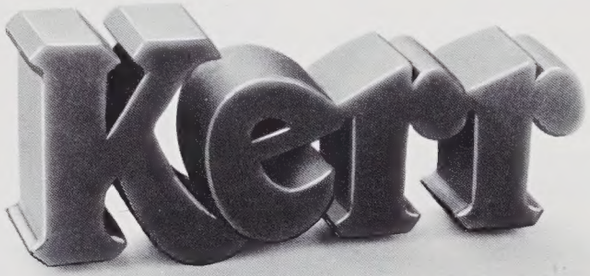

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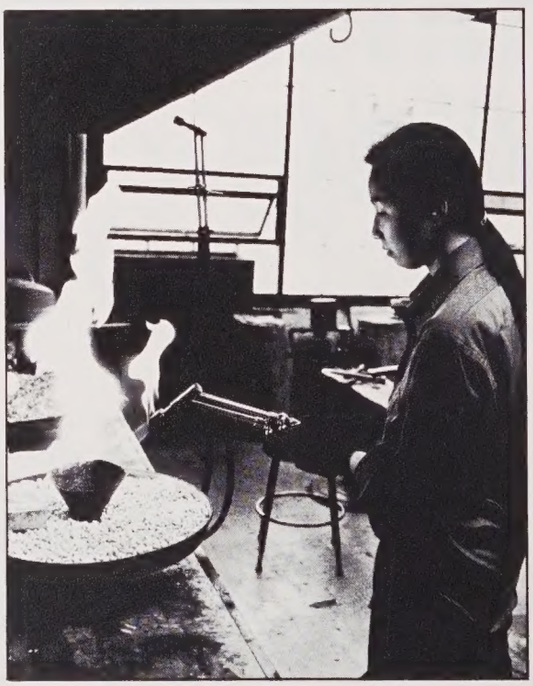

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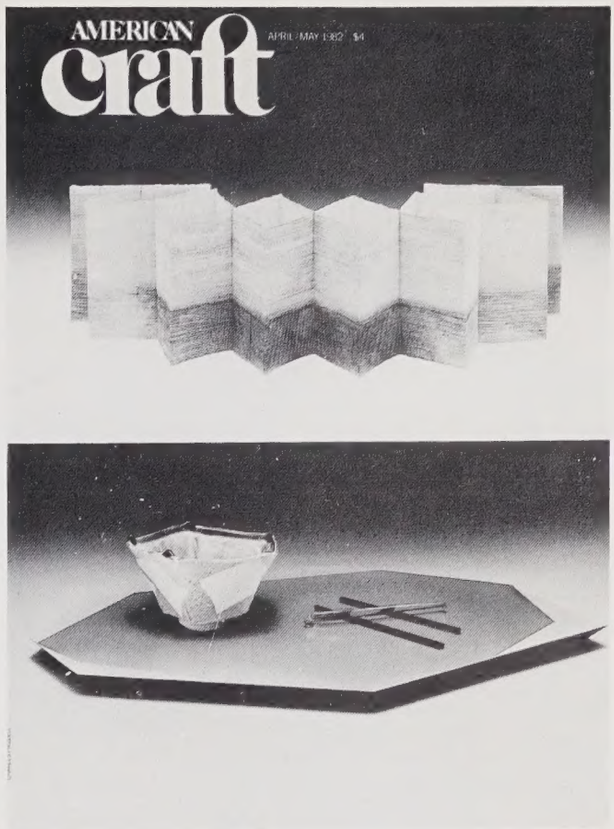

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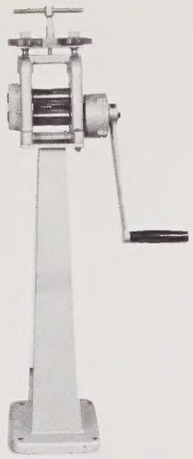

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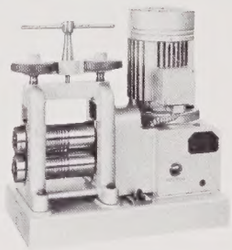

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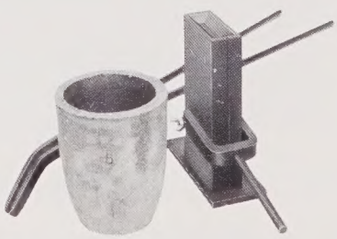

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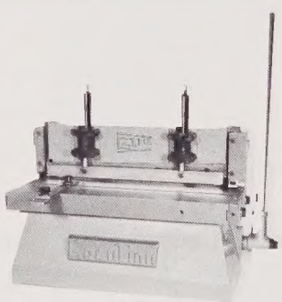
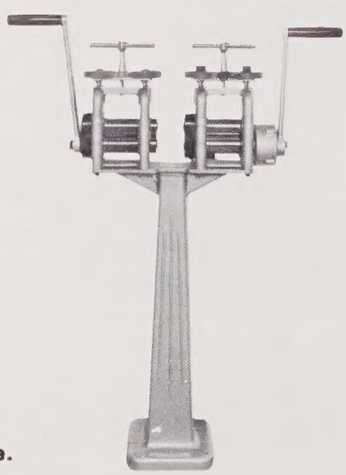


IRM Model Duplex R Double Head Rolling Mill for Plate and Wire
Width Reducer: 100mm x 6 mm. Weight: 141 lbs. this unit is available with embossing rolls and is in stock.



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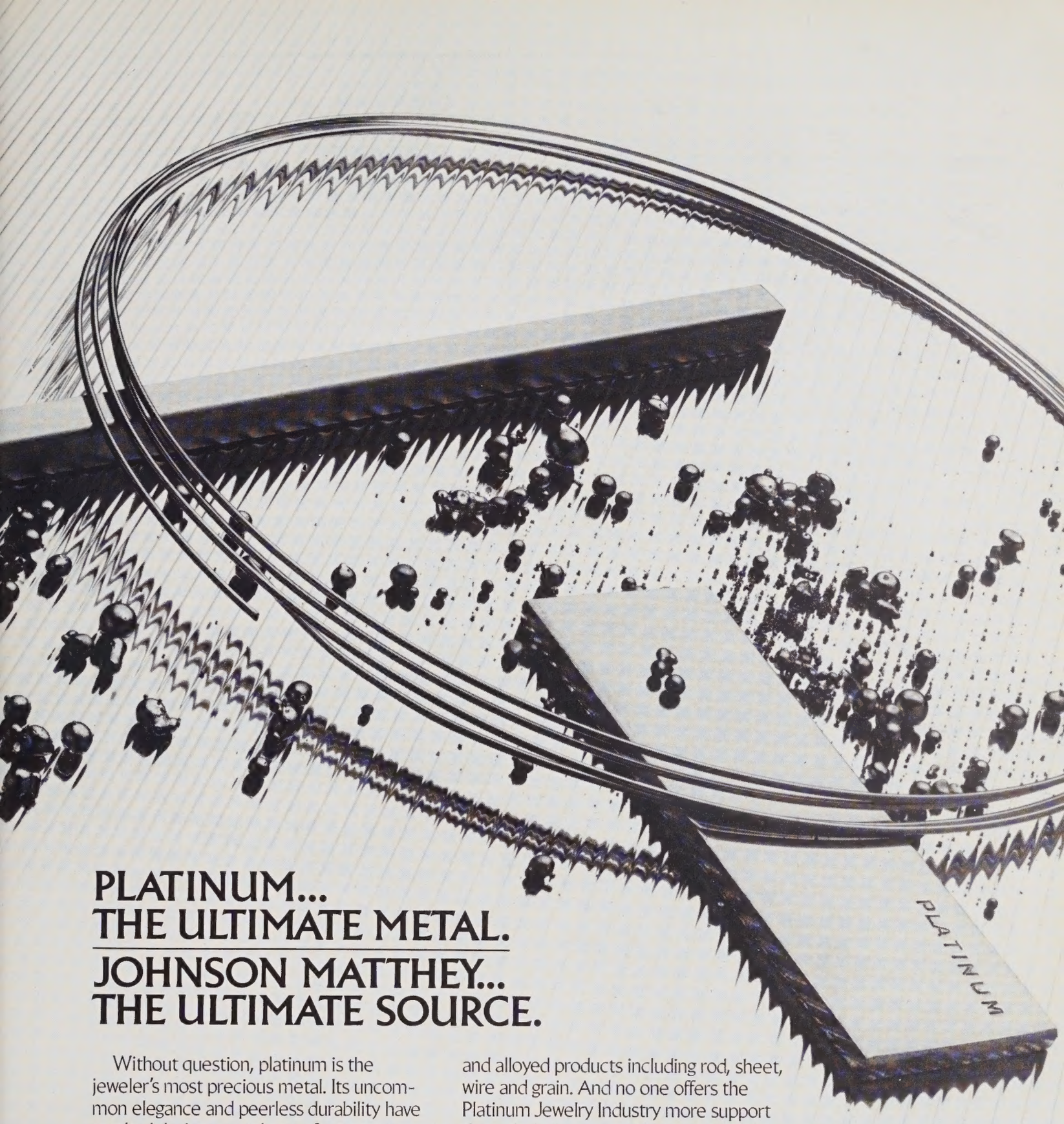

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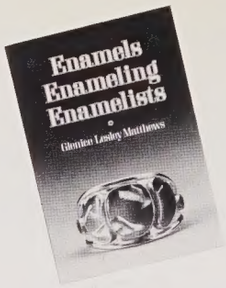

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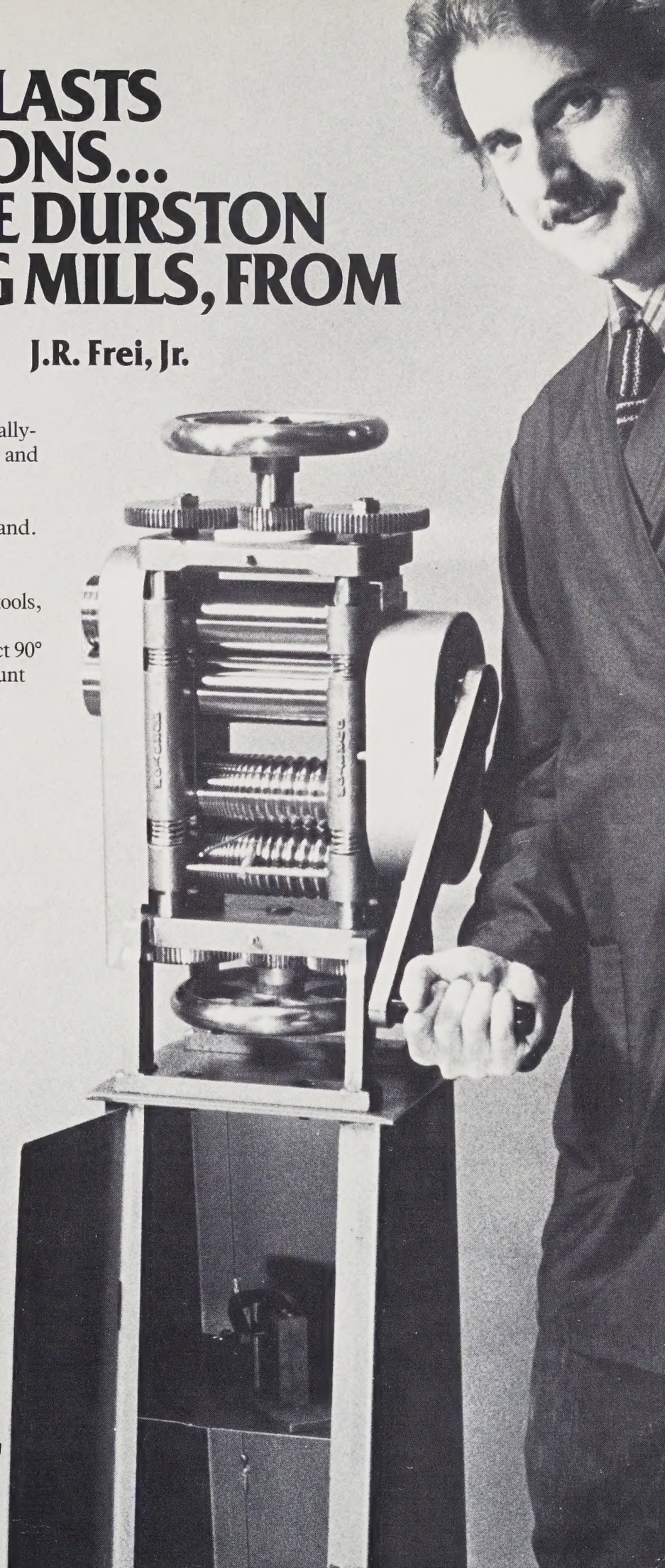

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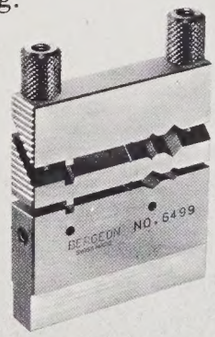

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